

NEW WRITINGS BY
WILLIAM HAZLITT.
SECOND SERIES

NEW WRITINGS ·
FIRST SERIES

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Second Impression

*NEW WRITINGS BY
WILLIAM HAZLITT:
SECOND SERIES*

COLLECTED BY P. P. HOWE

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PREFACE

THE aim of this book is to do for the rest of Hazlitt's career what the First Series did for the concluding two years of it—namely to come along in the wake of former editors and to add to their harvest where possible. If the gleanings are fewer and further between, there is one principal reason for this, which is that Hazlitt was a fairly assiduous collector of his own journalism, and that, while he had life and health, he did very much better what, as regards the last two years, he had to leave for other hands to do for him. Even so, however, he left things lying on one hand and the other which it has been the task of his editors in general, and of Messrs. Waller and Glover in their Collected Edition particularly, to pick up. My own task has been, as on the former occasion, to revise and collate the efforts of these excellent editors as well as those of Hazlitt's principal bibliographer, M. Jules Douady. The assistance I have received from them will once more be found acknowledged beneath the various titles in the notes at the end of the book. On a summary I find that, of the thirty-nine pieces of various lengths which are here given, only three have been previously pointed to. For the remainder of the attributions, with a single exception, I am entirely responsible.

PREFACE

The pieces are printed in a chronological sequence, which, while resulting in some mixture of subject matter, will probably best serve the purpose of biographical explication which has been partly my aim. The prospectus of the 'History of English Philosophy,' commented on with some prominence by Mr. Birrell in his English Men of Letters volume as tantalizingly missing, was found reposing among the William Windham MSS. in the British Museum. I know of no other copy in existence, this souvenir of Hazlitt's earlier or metaphysical phase having escaped the boarding hand of even the indefatigable Crabbe Robinson. A mixed bag of overlooked pieces from his journalistic apprenticeship to the 'Morning Chronicle' includes the hitherto unidentified criticism of Sir Thomas Lawrence which assisted at least in bringing about his summary dismissal from that journal. The 'Examiner' and the 'Champion' contribute two or three pieces, the last named a specimen of his art criticism which struck his contemporaries as of first-class importance. The circumstances under which Hazlitt joined 'The Times' are broadly known to us, and the reason which caused him to abandon daily theatrical criticism admits of no doubt—he found the late hours too much for his health. What we do not know is why, on leaving 'The Times' with every expression of cordiality, he made such a small draft on his contributions to that journal in compiling his collected dramatic criticisms, 'A View of the English Stage.' My own surmise would be that the rule of the paper was against the practice, and that in entering into his contract he omitted to stipulate for that right of reprinting which he enjoyed

PREFACE

unreservedly elsewhere. A friendly compromise was therefore possibly arrived at. At all events, 'A View of the English Stage' contains only two 'Times' criticisms, one major and one minor; and the establishment of the duration of his connection with the paper was the work of Messrs Waller and Glover, who made their starting point the first of the criticisms which Hazlitt himself reprinted, that on the retirement of Keble (June 25, 1817). On looking into the file, however, I found a month before this (May 28) a review of the 'Characters of Shakespeare's Plays' which, by its prominence and tone, seemed to me extremely suggestive. I therefore looked back, and arrived at the evidence presented in this book that Hazlitt's association with the paper extended over a longer period than has hitherto been suspected. In addition to beginning it a full two months earlier, I have filled in various omissions in the period from June to December covered by Messrs. Waller and Glover, the total effect being just about to double the number of his 'Times' criticisms which have hitherto been made public.

As companions to these new dramatic criticisms, ten introductions to the drama will be found, the explanation regarding which is simple. When Hazlitt's son prepared for publication the third (1841) edition of the 'English Comic Writers' he incorporated in it, as he explained, various 'critical prefaces, written by my father for Mr. Oxberry's Editions of the various Plays remarked upon'. The prefaces referred to are six in number, and, while the text of the 'Comic Writers' thus added to has been reprinted by Mr. Austin Dobson and other editors, Messrs. Waller and

P R E F A C E

Glover, perhaps more properly, relegated this matter to their notes. They omitted to notice, however, that in addition to contributing to Oxberry's 'New English Drama' prefaces to plays which are the subject of mention, although not of extended treatment, in the 'Comic Writers,' Hazlitt also contributed ten others to plays which fall outside the scope of that work. These are the papers now for the first time identified and reprinted.

The remaining pieces will speak for themselves, or, if they do not, the requisite information will, I hope, be found at the end of the book. I have only to add that for the paper which comes last I am indebted to the generosity of the owner, Mr A C Goodyear of Buffalo, and to the Editor of the 'London Mercury'
P. P. HOWE.

PROSPECTUS OF
A HISTORY OF ENGLISH PHILOSOPHY

PROSPECTUS OF A HISTORY OF ENGLISH PHILOSOPHY

THE design of the work which is here offered to the notice of the public will be, first and more immediately, to give a clear, condensed, and satisfactory account of the principal English philosophers who have treated on moral and metaphysical subjects from the time of Lord Bacon to the present day. In this part of his subject the writer will attempt to show what the real opinions of the most celebrated writers were, and the steps by which they arrived at them, to trace the connection, or point out the differences, between their several systems, to discover the peculiar bias and turn of their minds, and in what their true strength or weakness lay.—Men's opinions and reasonings depend more on the character and temper of their minds than we are apt to conceive. Not only their prejudices and passions, and the light in which they have been accustomed to view things, influence them much more than the nature of the things themselves; but a great deal depends on the very cast of their understandings, disposing them to imbibe certain prejudices, and confining them to a certain range of thought.

Secondly, it will be the writer's object, besides reporting the opinions of others, to act as judge or umpire between them, to distinguish (as far as he is

able) the boundaries of the true and false philosophy, and try if he cannot lay the foundation of a system more conformable to reason and experience, and, in its practical results at least, approaching nearer to the common sense of mankind, than the one which has been generally received by the most knowing persons who have attended to such subjects within the last century; I mean the material, or modern, philosophy, as it has been called. This is indeed a bold undertaking, and I could wish that it had fallen into abler hands. My only pretensions to execute it properly are, an early familiar acquaintance with most of the subjects to be treated of, and a long and patient habit of thinking, which has been, in truth, the business of my life.

According to this philosophy, as I understand it, the mind itself is nothing, and external impressions everything. All thought is to be resolved into sensation, all morality into the love of pleasure, and all action into mechanical impulse. These three propositions, taken together, embrace almost every question relating to the human mind; and in their different ramifications and intersections form a net, not unlike that used by the enchanters of old, which, whosoever has once thrown over him, will find all further efforts vain, and his attempts to reason freely on any subject in which his own nature is concerned, baffled and confounded in every direction.

It will be my business to explain at large hereafter, how this false system of philosophy has been gradually growing up to its present height ever since the time of Lord Bacon, from a wrong

interpretation of the word *experience*, confining it to a knowledge of things without us; whereas it in fact includes all knowledge, relating to objects either within or out of the mind, of which we have any direct and positive evidence. Physical experience is indeed the foundation and the test of that part of philosophy which relates to physical objects; further, physical analogy is the only rule by which we can extend and apply our immediate knowledge, or reason on the nature of the different objects around us. But to say that physical experiment is either the test, or source, or guide, of that other part of philosophy which relates to our internal perceptions, that we are to look in external nature for the form, the substance, the color, the very life and being of whatever exists in our own minds, or that we can only infer the laws which regulate the phenomena of the mind from those which regulate the phenomena of matter is to confound two things essentially distinct. Our knowledge of mental phenomena from consciousness, reflection, or observation of their correspondent signs in others is the true basis of metaphysical inquiry, as the knowledge of *facts* is the only solid basis of natural philosophy. To argue otherwise is to assert that the best method of ascertaining the properties of air is by making experiments on mineral substances. It is assuming the very point in dispute (namely, the strict affinity between mind and matter, inasmuch that we may always judge of the one by the other), on no better foundation than an unmeaning and palpable play of words.

Lord Bacon was undoubtedly a great man, indeed

one of the greatest that have adorned this or any other country. He was a man of a clear and active spirit, of a most fertile genius, of vast designs, of general knowledge, and of profound wisdom. He united the powers of imagination and understanding (as they are generally called) in a greater degree than almost any other writer. He was certainly one of the strongest instances of those men who by the rare privilege of their nature are at once poets and philosophers, and see equally into both worlds—the material and the visible, and the incorporeal and invisible forms of things. The school-men and their followers attended to nothing but the latter. They seem to have alike disregarded both kinds of experience, that relating to external objects, or our own internal feelings. From the imperfect state of knowledge they had few facts to go by; and, intoxicated with the novelty of their vain distinctions, they would be tempted to despise the clearest, and most obvious suggestions of their own minds. Hence arose ‘their logomachies’—their everlasting word-fights, their sharp disputes, their captious, bootless controversies. As Lord Bacon expresses it, ‘they were made fierce with dark keeping,’ signifying that their angry and unintelligible contests with one another were in consequence of their not having really any distinct objects to engage their attention. They built altogether, on their own whims and fancies; and, buoyed up by their specific levity, they mounted in their airy disputations in endless flights and circles, clamouring like birds of prey, till they equally lost sight of truth and nature. This great man

therefore did an essential service to philosophy in wishing to recall men's attention to facts and experience which had been almost entirely neglected, and so, by incorporating the abstract with the concrete, and general notions with individual objects, to give to our reasonings that solidity and firmness which they must otherwise always want. He did nothing but insist on the necessity of experience. He laid the most stress upon this, because it was the most needed at the time, particularly in natural science; and from the wider field that is open to it there, as well as the prodigious success it has met with, this latter sense of the word, in which it is tantamount to physical experiment, has so far engrossed the whole of our attention, that mind has, for a good while past, been in some danger of being overlaid by matter. We run from one error into another. and as we were wrong at first, so in altering our course, we have faced about into the opposite extreme. We despised experience altogether before. now we would have nothing but experience, and that of the grossest kind. We have, it is true, gained much by not consulting the suggestions of our own minds in questions where they could inform us of nothing, namely, in the laws and phenomena of the material world, and we have hastily concluded (reversing the rule) that the only way to arrive at the knowledge of ourselves also, was to lay aside the dictates of our own consciousness, thoughts, and feelings, as deceitful and insufficient guides, though they are the only means by which we can obtain the least light upon the subject — We seem to have resigned

power we should not only be incapable of judging or reasoning on any subject, that is, of perceiving the relations between a variety of objects, but we could never have so much as a single *idea* of any object whatever, since there is no object which does not consist of a number of parts arranged in a certain manner. But of this arrangement the parts themselves cannot be conscious. Ideas are offspring of the understanding, not of the senses.—The whole of Mr. Locke's Essay is unhappily founded on a supposition that ideas are but copies of sensible impressions, into which he was led very much by considering particular given objects as simple ideas; and thus by including the forming power of the mind in simple perception, we, first of all, contrived to do without the *name* of the understanding, and soon after it became the fashion to discard the *thing*, the whole process of thought and reason, or what are called the operations of the mind, being resolved into the more refined pulsations of matter.

III That the power of abstraction is a necessary consequence of the limitation of the comprehending power of the mind. since if it were a previous condition of our having the ideas of things that we should comprehend distinctly *all* the particulars of which they are composed, we could have no ideas at all. The same reasoning by which it has been attempted to prove that we have no abstract ideas, would prove that we have no particular ones. Perfect and absolute distinctness would require not only the knowledge of all the individual objects in a class, but of all the parts of each object,

which is impossible. For there is no one of those objects, called individuals (as a tree, a house, a man, &c.) but it consists of an infinite number of parts. Now that the mind gives a distinct attention to all these, or determines exactly within itself what each of them is, before it can have any notion of the general result, *viz.* of that particular object, is what no one on reflection will maintain: yet it must have this perfect and detailed knowledge, or an imperfect and abstract one. To deny that we can have any knowledge or conception of things without clearly apprehending every different circumstance belonging to them, is to exclude all ideas from the mind. It is only by passing over their differences, taking them in the gross, and attending to the general effect of a number of undistinguished, and undistinguishable impressions that we ever arrive at those just notions of objects, on which all our after-knowledge is built. The knowledge of every finite being rests in generals: and the only difference between abstract and particular, is that of being more or less general, of leaving out more or fewer circumstances.

IV That reason is a distinct source of knowledge or inlet of truth, over and above *experience*.

V. That the principle of association does not account for all our ideas, feelings, and actions.

VI That there is a principle of natural benevolence in the human mind: for that the idea of absolute selfishness, or of the mind's being affected solely by the actual impressions of things upon itself, is inconsistent not only with all desire of the good of others, but of our own future good, the only

object of a rational and practical self-interest.—For a fuller proof of this, and the foregoing proposition, the writer begs to refer to the Essay formerly named.

VII. That the love of pleasure or happiness is not the only principle of action, but that there are others necessarily implied in the nature of man as an active and intelligent being. The love of truth is one of these. There is a fitness or congruity of actions and objects to the mind independent of their connection with pleasure or pain, for a capacity of pleasure and pain does not constitute the whole of our faculties. Hence that class of motives, distinguished by the ancients under the names of the τὸ πρέπον, or *bonestum*, and comprehending the decency and propriety of actions, as well as their utility.

VIII. That moral obligation is not, as it has been strangely defined to be, the strongest motive, which would justify any action whatever. It always, I conceive, expresses the hold or power (be it stronger or weaker) which certain given motives have over the mind, or the ties by which men are bound to their duty. It has its foundation in the moral and rational nature of man, or in that principle—call it reason, conscience, moral sense, what you will—which, without any reference to our own interests, passions, and pursuits, approves of certain actions and sentiments as right, and condemns others as wrong. To act right is to act in conformity to this standard.

IX. That the mind is not a mechanical, but a rational and voluntary agent. Or in other words, motives do not impel the will immediately, absolutely, and irresistibly, but by means of the

understanding which determines the choice of the object, the means of pursuing it, and the degree of force necessary to accomplish it. That is, the mind itself is a real agent, or one cause that actuates the will. In this consists its long-contested freedom. It is *free*, in as far as it is not the slave of external impressions, physical impulses, or blind senseless motives. It is free, as the body is free, when it is not subject to a power out of itself, though its operations still depend on certain powers and principles within itself. It is not thrust upon any actions without its own consent and concurrence. This does not imply that actions are without a cause, but that *that* cause is not a mechanical one. • The term Necessity generally means something more than the connection between cause and effect, *viz.* a particular sort and degree of power, or an external force, and one that admits of no controul, in which sense it is not applicable to the human mind. I cannot express what I would say on this subject in any manner so well as in the words of a late celebrated writer.

‘That we are indeed mechanical and dependent beings, I need no other proof than my own feelings; and from the same feelings I learn with equal conviction that we are not merely such, that there is a power within which struggles against the force and bias of that mechanism, commands its motion, and by frequent practice reduces it to that ready obedience which we call habit; and all this in conformity to a preconceived opinion (no matter whether right or wrong), to that least material of all agents, a thought.’—GRAY’S LETTERS.

X. That the idea of power is inseparable from activity. We do not get this idea from the outward changes which take place in matter, but from the exertion of it in ourselves. Whoever has stretched out his hand to an object must have had the feeling of power: and to insist on a formal definition of this idea as necessary to understand it, is like asking the meaning of pleasure and pain, which have never yet been denied to exist, though I do not know that any one has explained them.

The same general theory might be applied to illustrate various other subjects, such as those relating to genius, taste, feeling, the boundaries of speculative and practical reason, the influence of opinion on manners, &c., questions which seem to stand in need of some illustration.

This slight sketch may, it is hoped, convey a sufficient idea of the work, to enable those who are versed in such subjects to determine how far it is entitled to the public attention, at least as to its design. Without pretending to much originality, I believe it possible to deduce from preceding writers all the materials of a sound philosophy, and to show that the advantages which the advocates of the modern system have had over their opponents have not been so much in the solidity of their reasonings, as in the novelty of their opinions, aided by that alertness and confidence which men always have in attacking any common and long-established principle. For the defence which is set up is always imputed to prejudice. There is, however, no prejudice so strong as that which is founded on a

ENGLISH PHILOSOPHY

supposed superiority to prejudice. But be this as it may, most of the topics have been completely exhausted, and it requires perhaps little more than a careful review of the different arguments to see on which side the truth lies. The effects of novelty have had time to wear off, and we have been pretty well weaned from our prejudices. It is only by looking back on the mistakes into which we have been led by our too great obstinacy in maintaining received opinions, or our too great eagerness in getting rid of them, that we can hope to hit upon the golden mean ; or that the history of philosophy is ever likely to become anything but a tissue of errors and contradictions.

EARLY JOURNALISM

MME. DE STAEL'S NEW WORK

WE do not wonder that the censors of the press did not permit this very able production¹ to appear in France. Its chief object seems to be to mortify the natural prejudices and exclusive egotism of the French in literature, by a systematic and galling comparison with the works of the most celebrated German writers, and to establish that balance of power which they are as little inclined to admit in matters of taste and opinion as in political questions. Her work may be considered as the best analysis that has been given of the literary and philosophical productions of the modern Germans, and as the best and most intelligible translation of their literary and philosophical creed. She has very successfully employed the principles of philosophical criticism advanced by Schlegel, Schiller, Goethe, and others, in exposing the necessary defects of French poetry, and has not unfrequently turned their own weapons against themselves. Her opinions and reasonings are undoubtedly for the most part those of the German school ; but she has added to them a point, a brilliance, and lightness which they exceedingly wanted before. A work which unites the originality and profundity

¹ *De l'Allemagne*, London, 1813

of German research with the elegance and rapidity of French composition, must be no unimportant accession to European literature. This work is, however, more critical than historical or descriptive—more philosophical than popular, but it is philosophy and criticism in a very graceful and animated form. The political reflections in the work are very few, and their application is by no means direct or obvious. In the analysis of the character of the people of Germany, she seems disposed to reproach them with the contemplative indifference and abstraction of their pursuits, and anxious to rouse them from the lethargy of thought to life and action. She has with great ingenuity commented on the text of one of their own authors, who said that the dominion of the sea belonged to the English, that of the land to the French, and *that of the air to the Germans*. She justly considers the general disposition of the people of Germany as contemplative, as delighting in what is remote and ideal, and as tending little to action, and very distinctly accounts for this predominant character from the political circumstances and individual habits of the people, the want of a general impulse and interest in the different states, the number of literary institutions, &c.

‘These small capitals of the north of Germany, where we meet with so many men of the highest character for learning, occupied exclusively with past history and abstract ideas, often afford no kind of amusement; there are no public exhibitions, and little society; time there runs out, as it were, drop by drop, and does not interrupt by its sound

the silence and the solitude of thought. The Germans have succeeded in establishing a republic of letters, animated and independent. They supply the want of the interest arising from events by the interest attached to ideas. The citizens of this contemplative republic, disengaged from almost every kind of connection with public and private affairs, labour in obscurity like miners; and like them, surrounded with hidden treasures, explore in silence the intellectual riches of the human race.

The inconsequentiality of action to thought is strongly depicted by the author as a part of the German character. the theory is at least correct; but she afterwards forgets herself, and represents the *seriousness* of this people, as identifying the two together. *Werter*, she says, has produced numberless suicides, and the *Robbers* of Schiller systematic, sentimental gangs of banditti.

Madame de Stael has pointed out, with great subtlety and clearness, the distinctive characters of the French and German drama, as connected with the knowledge of the world and the spirit of conversation on one hand, or with contemplation and intellectual refinement on the other. She very happily ridicules the imitation of the French school by the German poets, and applies to these servile and lifeless copies the praise which Orlando, in *Ariosto*, bestows upon his horse, 'who possessed all imaginable excellences, but had one fault, that he was dead.' With equal felicity she has observed of Kant, whose popular writings were exceedingly obscure, compared with the force and precision of

his logical disquisitions, 'That he resembled the Israelites, who were guided by a pillar of fire by night, and by a cloud by day!'

In her remarks on the German poets, she evidently gives a decided preference to Goethe. In this preference we cannot help suspecting her to have been a little influenced by the extreme reputation of Goethe among his countrymen, as well as by the power of his talents in conversation, which appear to be of a very high order. She gives a very amusing description of her first interview with Schiller, in which she undertook, with much warmth, to show the absolute superiority of the French tragedy over every other. Schiller, who had never spoken French, defended himself with such modesty and strength of reasoning, that Madame de Stael immediately conceived equal admiration for his understanding and character. Should it not almost seem by this as if she was willing to maintain the prejudices of the French in Germany, and to retort the discoveries of the Germans upon the French? A little coquetry is perhaps as inseparable from female authorship as from female sovereignty; and women are generally disposed to exact more deference to their caprices than is reasonable in cases which have nothing to do with gallantry. Much of the tone of French literature may undoubtedly be traced to this circumstance.

Except *Werter*, the translations from Goethe into English have not been popular; and *Werter*, Goethe himself, and his admirers, affect to despise. The only passage we could find in Madame de

Stael's work, which conveys an idea of the powers of this author at all adequate to those which are ascribed to him, is the following :—

‘Among the great number of beautiful passages which might be cited from this work (*Iphigenia in Tauris*) there is one without parallel anywhere else ; Iphigenia, in her grief, recollects an old song known in the family, and which her nurse had taught her from her cradle ; it is the song which the Fates sing to Tantalus in hell. They recal to him his former state, when he sat as guest with the Gods at their golden tables. They describe the dreadful moment when he was hurled from his throne, the punishment inflicted on him by the Gods, the tranquillity which these same Gods enjoy who govern the universe, and which the lamentations of the damned cannot disturb. The Fates announce to the grand-children of Tantalus that the Gods will avert their countenance from them because their features recal those of their father. The aged Tantalus hears the mournful song in the eternal night that surrounds him, thinks of his children, and bows his guilty head. The most striking images, the metre which accords exactly with the sentiments, give to this poem the air of a national tradition. It is one of the greatest efforts of genius thus to identify itself with antiquity, and to combine at the same time all that would have been popular among the Greeks, with all that conveys, after the lapse of ages, the most dreadful solemnity.’ If the original passage answers to this description, it is fine indeed !

That Madame de Stael is not blind to the faults

of her favourite author, the following remarks will sufficiently shew.

‘By a singular vicissitude in taste, it has happened that the Germans at first attacked our dramatic writers as converting all their heroes into Frenchmen. They have with reason insisted on historic truth as necessary to contrast the colours, and give life to the poetry.—But then, all at once, they have been weary of their own success in this way, and have produced abstract representations in which the relations of mankind were expressed in a general manner, and in which time, place, and circumstance passed for nothing. In a drama of this kind by Goethe, the author calls the different characters, the Duke, the King, the Father, the Daughter, &c., without any other designation.

‘Such a tragedy is only calculated to be acted in the Palace of Odin, where the dead still continue their different occupations on earth, where the hunter, himself a shade, eagerly pursues the shade of a stag, and fantastic warriors combat together in the clouds. It should appear that Goethe, at one period, conceived an absolute disgust to all interest in dramatic compositions. It was sometimes to be met with in bad works; and he concluded that it ought to be banished from good ones. Nevertheless, a man of superior mind ought not to disdain what gives universal pleasure; he cannot relinquish his resemblance with his kind, if he wishes to make others feel his own value. Granting that the tyranny of custom often introduces an artificial air into the best French tragedies, it cannot be denied that there is the same want of

natural expression in the systematic and theoretical productions of the German muse. If exaggerated declamation is affected, there is a certain kind of intellectual calm which is not less so. It is a kind of arrogated superiority over the affections of the soul, which may accord very well with philosophy, but is totally out of character in the dramatic art. Goethe's works are composed according to different principles and systems. In the *Tasso* and *Iphigenia*, he conceives of tragedy as a lofty relic of the monuments of antiquity. These works have all the beauty of form, the splendour and glossy smoothness of marble, but they are as cold and as motionless.'

These remarks are a model of philosophic criticism. We shall only add, that they appear to us to apply in all their force to the *Herman and Dorothea*, and to *Count Egmont*, which are here, however, highly praised. Both these works, which are known to the English reader, are throughout a studied suppression of imagination and natural passion. The author is a poetical ascetic, who avoids the indulgence of his own feelings, and whatever can excite emotion in others, as a violation of the severe rules of composition which he has imposed upon himself. Finding that to produce an effect was not everything, he supposed that not to produce an effect was everything. Finding that Shakspeare had something which Schiller and Kotzebue wanted, he seemed to imagine that not to be Schiller or Kotzebue was to be Shakspeare;—as if a work of genius, like a work of criticism, could be composed of merely negative qualities, or as if the tragic muse should be invoked only in the spirit of contradiction.

MME. DE STAEL'S NEW WORK

Goethe in this determination to please the public in spite of themselves, reminds us of the pedantic lover in the *Inconstant*, who tries to succeed with his mistress 'by philosophical ogling and amorous frowns!'

The style of Madame de Stael in these volumes, is a happy mixture of the two classes of composition, which she herself has so well distinguished as characteristic of different nations, *the classical* and *the romantic*. She writes like a Frenchwoman, but like the daughter of Susan Kurchod.

THE LAUREAT

THE *COURIER* of Saturday contains a pretended contradiction, from authority, of our statement 'on the subject of the Laureat.' 'Some truth there is,' they say, in it, 'but dashed and brewed with lies.' To us who do not speak 'from authority,' it is always a consolation to find that there is *some truth* in what we say, and as to the latter part of the quotation, we receive it as a common and customary tribute from the civility of these polished writers. Their pens would be quite clogged with the honied sweets of courtly adulation, if it were not carried off by the strong acid of vulgar abuse. We do not know, however, how we have drawn down their indignation on the present occasion, except that they are so used to vent their stock of spleen upon our pages that they cannot help it. If there had been any material, or, indeed, any the most trivial error in our account, we believe the indefatigable captious zeal of *The Courier* would not have neglected to point it out. It appears that the choice lies between Mr. Scott and Mr. Southey; but 'it is *false*,' says *The Courier*, 'that any individual interest has endeavoured to turn the balance in favour of either of these Gentlemen. Their distinguished literary characters have been alone their recommendation.' And so they might continue to be to the end of time,

unless some one, like Mr. Croker, having the energetic lines quoted by Mr. Southey as full before his eyes as *The Courier* has the various shades of our opinions respecting the Spanish war, should put an end to the eternal poise of undistinguishable merit, by saying, 'The Poet, Sir, is mine honest friend,' or unless Mr. Southey and Mr. Scott should agree to write coalition odes between them.

We did certainly anticipate Mr. Southey's appointment 'to the office,' and we could not help indulging a little pleasantry on the occasion. We believe that even Mr. Southey's own friends will not hear of his appointment without a smile. We cordially allow Mr. Southey to be an honest man and an excellent Poet, but we do not (with deference to the authority of *The Courier*) think him a bit better qualified for the post of 'Laureat' on either of these accounts, and we sincerely hope that it will not prove 'the *trou de rat*, the Ciudad Rodrigo,' of both—the Laureat Hearse where Lyric lies!' To us who are plain, straightforward men, and not gifted with those profound resources of political casuistry with which others are blest, there appears to be a little inconsistency between some of Mr. Southey's former writings and his becoming the *hired panegyrist* of the court. If there is no inconsistency between the two, we ask, whether fifteen years ago the mention of Mr. Southey's name, 'as a worthy person to fill the chair of the immortal Dryden,' would not have been considered as an intentional insult?

But it seems we have made a jest at Mr. Southey's well-known opinions and literary labours in the cause

of the Peninsula, which have been the cause of this revolution at court in his favour; and it is proudly asserted, that 'his undiminished zeal for the liberties of mankind has awakened the enthusiasm, with which we reproach him, for the freedom of Spain.' We presume it is the same undiminished zeal for the liberties of mankind, which has also awakened the same ardour in *The Courier* and its patrons in the same cause.—Without entering into this question with *The Courier* (for we really despise their cant about liberty more than we do even their servile sophistry), we shall just say, that there does appear some slight disparity—a little falling off (sufficient to excite a smile in us, and a severer feeling of regret in Mr. Southey), between the splendour of his early projects for the liberties of mankind, and the utmost that he can now hope from the accomplishment of the freedom of Spain. We see but few and faint traces of resemblance between the romantic schemes of perfectibility so beautifully described by Mr. Southey and his friends, as about to be realized in 'Philarmonia's undivided dale,' and the cause of Spain, on which they, in their pride of youth, would have bestowed epithets not less insulting than those which *The Courier* falsely imputes to us. Why what a sort of men these poets are! With what gaiety and alacrity they can lay the brightest colours on the darkest ground!

'Two such I saw, what time the labour'd ox,
In his loose tresses, from the furrow came,
And the swink't hedger at his supper sate,
I saw them under a green mantling vine,
That crawls along the side of yon small hill,

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Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots ·
 Their port was more than human as they stood ;
 I took it for a fairy vision
 Of some gay creatures of the element,
 That in the colours of the rainbow live,
 And play i'th' plighted clouds I was awe-struck,
 And as I pass'd I worshipp'd *if those you seek,*
It were a journey like the path to Heaven
To help you find them !'

The personal application of these lines may not perhaps be very intelligible to *The Courier*. No matter.

As to 'the poetical architecture of temples of glory, &c., to which Mr. Southey will, in his professional capacity, be required to contribute,' we really think it immaterial whether he chooses to raise them 'on the banks of the Tagus or the Tormes, the Ebro or the Douro, in the plains of Salamanca, or the fields of Vittoria.' But of this we remain sure, and we dare to re-echo 'our prognosticated prophecies' in the ears of *The Courier*, that till the Spaniards *build their own castles*, all the splendid structures, that Mr. Southey, or anyone else, shall build for them, will be mere castles in Spain. *The Courier's* 'solemn temples and gorgeous palaces' will otherwise soon

' Melt into thin air ,
 And like the baseless fabric of a vision,
 The unsubstantial pageant faded,
 Leave not a wreck behind !'

THE POLITICAL AUTOMATON : A MODERN CHARACTER

THE *thing* is hired to soothe or inflame the public mind, as occasion requires ; and succeeds in misleading the ignorant by a voluntary abuse of terms and an unlimited command over the figures of speech. Its only principle is to make itself subservient to the will of its employer. And in order to become a convenient tool, it begins by being the dupe of its own artifice. It holds all its little acquirements in readiness to answer the most contemptible purposes—the defence of the folly or madness of the moment. From the pains it takes in dressing out its fib or sophistry, it grows fond of the dirty work. The force of habit hoodwinks what little understanding it has left. It at length asserts whatever it pleases, and believes whatever it asserts. It strains hard to reconcile contradictions, and redoubles the loudness of its vaunts and the fierceness of its gestures to hide the extravagance of its pretensions. It is confident of the future in proportion to the failure of the past, and is hardened over with the shame of repeated detection. Like a poor player, it struts and frets itself into a notion of the reality of the part it is acting—outstarès common sense, belies experience, regulates the course of events by fustian phrases, treats the interests of states as the

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playthings of its pen, and turns humanity into a jest and a bye-word. When *the thing* is perfect, it unites the brutal violence of the bravo with the impudent levity of the prostitute. Yet, after all, and with so many qualifications, it is only a puppet !

THE LEX TALIONIS PRINCIPLE

'The vigorous prosecution of the war upon the territories of France has been, we hear, resolved upon by our Cabinet, in strict co-operation and unison with Russia, Prussia, and Austria *There will be no more diplomatic proceedings till the Allied Armies are in possession of Paris* A just principle demands that he who has been at Berlin, Vienna, and Moscow, should behold in his turn the capital of France in the possession of the Sovereigns of Moscow, and Vienna, and Berlin This is the place where trial is to be made of the affection of the French people for Bonaparte This is the spot which is to be the test and touchstone of his existence as a man The despatches transmitted to Lord Castlereagh are not of a pacific nature The Allies will receive overtures and proposals for a preliminary basis even before their armies get to Paris, but it is at Paris that they will make a full and explicit declaration of their views This we highly applaud What a crisis is at hand ! What events must be disclosed before the expiration of the present week !'—*The Courier*, Feb. 18

WE have been for some time prepared for this full and explicit declaration of their views by the pacific fomenters of war. 'Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots?' By long practice we can give something like a shrewd guess at what is passing in the minds of these agitators and their employers, before it is ripe for disclosure.

'Search then the ruling passion, there alone,
The wild are constant, and the cunning known.
This clue once found, unravels all the rest,
The prospect clears, and Wharton stands confest.'

If there could have been any doubt remaining on this subject, the above passage forms a comment on

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the ultimate views and principles of these respectable persons (respectable at least from their consistency), which cannot henceforward be mistaken. The character of the passage itself is partly of a political and partly of a prophetic cast—it unlocks the secrets of cabinets, and the secrets of fortune, and is equally *au fait* as to what ought to be and to what is to be. Every obstacle vanishes before the full-plumed self-complacency of these parrots of office. As an authority for the views of their patrons, we bow to them (we are not unacquainted with the convenient conductor by which profound state-secrets and new *ignes fatui*, ‘gliding meteorous,’ are communicated to them with all the smartness and rapidity of an electric shock)—but as to the event, we must be excused. Their prognostics have not yet the stamp of infallibility. True non-juring politicians without the honesty, they may be, but not political conjurors for all that.

The best way to place this passage in the light in which it ought to be viewed, is to ask ourselves a single question. Let us suppose, then, for a moment, that Mr. Whitbread, or those Members of the Opposition who gave, at the opening of the session, such premature credit to the moderate and altered tone of Ministers, had, instead of relying on the good faith and plighted honour of the Prince, in his profession of a sincere desire to treat for peace with the French Ruler—instead of trusting to the sleek integrity of Lord Castlereagh, or the miraculous conversion of Lord Liverpool, had abruptly declared, ‘We do not believe a word of all this; we have no confidence either in the pacific disposition

of our own Government, or in the moderation of the Allies, who, we have no doubt, will seize the first opportunity to break the pledge thus given in the face of day, to Parliament, the country—to France, and to the world.’ Would not such a declaration have been treated with natural indignation and contempt, as an affront to the Throne, a libel on the Government, an insult to our Allies, and as treason to the Country? What then is that—now that it is avowed from authority—which, if it had been anticipated three months ago by the Opposition, would have been an affront to the Throne, a libel on the Government, an insult to our Allies, and treason against the good faith and honour of the Country?

We certainly do not wonder that Lord Liverpool should have demurred to the admission of the new principle laid down by *The Courier*, as to the place of the negotiation; first, as he must be naturally jealous of Lord Castlereagh’s getting the start of him in his long projected march to Paris; and, secondly, because, if his memory does not fail him along with his fortitude in quitting office, he must reject, as a personal attack, the new-fangled reasoning of the Cabinet sycophants, *viz.* that no peace can be honourably concluded till the Sovereigns of Berlin, Vienna, and Moscow, reach Paris, because Bonaparte has been at Moscow, Vienna, and Berlin; for he must recollect full well that the same three Sovereigns, like the three blind calenders of Bagdat, set out long since for the same place, with his Lordship’s approbation and good liking (before the just and indispensable

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principle of *The Courier* was even dreamt of), on their own original stock of genius and humanity, and when not Moscow, or Vienna, or Berlin, but Ismael and Warsaw, were the watchword of these systematic lovers of justice. By the bye, what a vantage-ground must this 'just principle' of the present Cabinet give to any attempt to restore and vindicate the throne of Poland. But nothing of the kind is whispered between *The Courier* and its patrons; in their bird's-eye view of contingent events, there is no dotted line pointing out such a course of retributive justice. That sensibility of honour which 'feels a stain like a wound,' is here callous. The *summum jus*, and the *summa injuria*, have as close an affinity as ever. This project of our metaphysical righters of wrongs will, we know, treat as an obsolete question, as an impracticable chimera. Thus it is that the refined justice of *The Courier* always turns out either an old joke or a new expedient.

One would think, as they were the capitals of the Continental Princes which have been visited by Bonaparte's arms, that our Government might have left it to them to determine how far the point of honour or diplomatic gravity required them to return the compliment. We should hope at least, that our own Sovereign will not be in haste to join them at the old place of assignation, because if there is any truth in the principle with which *The Courier* has enriched the modern war-code, the consequence would be that the sword could never be sheathed with honour till the French people had planted the purple banners of victory on our native shores. Such are the desperate and unheard-

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of theories of ruthless hostility with which these miserable tools of a faction insult our understandings, as plain household truths! We should deprecate such a meeting on another account. We should be sorry to see the supreme head of these realms (except upon very sure grounds) make one at this royal *parie quarée*. The occasion, to be sure, would be fine—the scene tempting. So rich a grouse of Kings has not met together since the golden times of Ariosto, when it showered diadems, and the Soldan and the Sophi sat at one board. His Royal Highness might bespeak suitable apartments for himself and train in the old but spacious *Hotel de Ninon L'Enclos*, and carry over some of Sir Joshua's finest portraits, or Mr. Storchling's historical pictures,¹ to repair the devastation committed by the Cossacks in the Louvre. Our Princes

¹ We offer this suggestion from our anxious desire not to separate morals from politics, and shall, we hope, so far merit the thanks of those 'gentlemen and men of honour' who write in *The Times*. As the severity of *The Courier's* principles of political retribution, by which the invasion of an enemy's territory is to be inevitably followed up by the total loss of independence and even existence on the part of the aggressors, would, if acted upon, leave the shadow neither of independence nor existence to any state in Europe, so the puritanical and scrupulous morality of *The Times*, which shrinks with such exquisite susceptibility from the contamination of vice, would, we apprehend, put most of the Sovereigns of Europe out of a capacity of 'maintaining the relations of peace and amity' with their neighbours. It would be much better for those who are so very *tender-skinned* on this subject, not to inquire at all into the secret history of Courts or the private lives of Princes. These writers are bent on the return of the Bourbons, as conducive to the re-establishment of the exemplary morality of the old Court in France. We wish to ask whether on the same principles they approve of the restoration of Charles II in this country? Or whether there is much connection between the manners he brought back with him from France, and that 'pure religion breathing household laws,' which is supposed

have but seldom an opportunity afforded them of travelling into foreign parts, and so triumphant a one might never occur again. But still we would not advise such a step to be taken hastily. For the present we would not be answerable for the event. We are not blinded by the smiles of fortune, nor, from the swiftness with which her wheel has of late turned round, does it appear to us to have become fixed and immovable. So many august personages might by some unforeseen fatality find the same difficulty in returning that they have had in reaching this long-wished-for goal of their ambition.

We think the scheme not only hazardous, but not very gratifying to the vanity of those whom it is meant to flatter. Instead of a refined compliment, it seems to us to contain a bitter sarcasm. Is it meant to be insinuated by the literary bolsterers of modern greatness, that the Sovereigns of Europe will make but a poor figure till they have done something to ape Bonaparte? Must they top the part of conquerors and heroes, in imitation of the Corsican upstart, to satisfy the scruples of their jealous admirers? Or why must the exploded farce of the march to Paris be again vamped up and brought out with fresh *éclat* (as a masterpiece of poetical justice) in opposition to the disastrous expedition to Russia? The meddling flatterers of courts in this mistake the pretensions of their patrons altogether. They are not so satisfied with the native dignity and circumstantial awe which invest the

to be inseparable from *the good old times* — Morality is a very fine word, but as we do not wish to be convicted either of hypocrisy or a libel in our application of it, we in general chuse to pass it over.

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possessors of sovereign power These writers, tinctured with the leaven of Jacobinism, absurdly require that they should be not only great kings, but great men. They look farther than to the state-pageant; they do not believe in their own idols. But it is surely not necessary that those who are 'born to greatness' should also 'achieve' it. Why should they be roused from the harmless still-life of a court, and the pleasing slumbers into which they had been lulled on a throne, to rival the fame and follow the destinies of a vulgar mad-man? It was remarked by Swift that a perfect king should be a figure stuffed with straw. But even if any thing were wanting to these respectable persons, to place them on a level with Bonaparte, the present scheme would not answer the end. What a pity that the French Emperor has only one capital to satisfy the just pretensions of the Royal invaders! Or is one capital taken possession of by three monarchs equivalent to three taken possession of by one great captain? The arithmetical proportions do not hold; the moral alliteration is not correct; there is neither rhyme nor reason in the project. Some spirited episode must be added, which shall not be an exact parody on the text furnished by the French Emperor; some aggravating circumstances must be interwoven, some expiatory sacrifices offered up to satisfy the nice demands of regal justice. The French Emperor appeared at Berlin, Vienna, and Moscow, to demand peace. the full and explicit declaration of the views of the Sovereigns of Moscow, Vienna, and Berlin at Paris will probably require something more

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It is this circumstance which shews the hollowness of the principle itself, and the impossibility of introducing the *lex talionis* as a rigid clause in the public law of Europe. Each nation will of course claim the privilege for itself, and will remember only the injuries it has sustained. Thus the plea of right will be made the pretext of everlasting wrong. The tide of war will be rolled back without ceasing with every ebbing and flowing of success, and thus endless commotion and the destroying whirlwind will become the only forerunners of the halcyon peace. Will our political wizards say to the infuriated passions of men, when once set afloat, 'Hitherto shalt thou come and no farther?' Or will the Editors of *The Times* and *The Courier*, after marking out the lists, be present, as bottle-holders, to see fair play? We fear, that even the virtuous Moreau, or the heroic Crown Prince of Sweden, would, in such an event, scarcely have authority to assign the precise measure of barbarous revenge, or stem the torrent of regal justice in the height of its career and the plenitude of its triumph. Or are we to leave the event to chance?

'And let one spirit of the first-born Cain reign in all hearts,
That man, being set on bloody courses,
The rude scene may end, and darkness be the burial of the dead!'

If political partisans, or if kings, held the scales of justice as Gods, and if with the power they had the beneficence of Gods, such a certainty of retributive justice might be a means of preventing unprovoked

THE LEX TALIONIS PRINCIPLE

aggressions, and diminishing the calamities of war. But neither of these previous suppositions is true. For it must happen generally, that that power which has suffered most, or been the most aggrieved, is not the strongest—that is, able to revenge its own cause ; and that it is only the extremity of suffering, or the irritating sense of oppression, that has supplied the deficiency of physical by moral strength. And that to proceed, after having repelled the aggression, to retort the punishment on the heads of the aggressors, is to throw all the advantages of combating on their own soil, and all the stimulus of the sense of danger and suffering—that is, the whole weight of physical advantages and moral motives, into the opposite scale. Or if the physical strength has been the greatest on the side which has suffered most, as in the present instance, then there will be a tolerable presumption at least, that these sufferings have arisen from a neglect or contempt of the fundamental principle of the independence and security of states ; so that instead of requiring any new sufferings or sacrifices to establish this great practical truth, it will have already received its highest sanction in those very events which are considered as a sacrilegious violation of it. Farther, this principle, as a practical security for the good behaviour of sovereigns or of kingdoms, involves an anomaly in human nature, for it is ridiculous to suppose that a people will voluntarily submit to all the miseries of war, from a sense of abstract justice, who have not been deterred by any such sense of justice from wantonly inflicting those miseries on others.

ROYAL ACADEMY

WE do not remember in any former Exhibition so great a number of fine Portraits as at present adorn the walls of the Academy. We conceive that this is owing not so much to a greater power of execution, as to the evident improvement in the style of the artists. We have seen exhibitions, and have lamented to see them, in which the eye in vain sought relief from the glitter of the frames in the glare of the pictures, in which vermilion cheeks made vermilion lips look pale, in which the merciless splendour of the painter's pallet put nature out of countenance, and in which the unmeaning grimace of fashion and folly was the only variety in the wide dazzling waste of colour. The great defect and impediment to the progress of British art has hitherto been a desire to produce *effect* at the expense of everything else, and by the cheapest and most obvious means, to lose all the delicacy and variety of nature in one undistinguished bloom of florid health, and all precision, truth and refinement of character in the same harmless mould of smiling, self-complacent insipidity.

Pleased with itself, that all the world can please '

Such, we say, has too often been the recipe of our most popular artists for obtaining fame and fortune,

originating no doubt in accidental and local circumstances, and partly fostered by false taste and criticism. We are sincerely happy to be able to say that they have at present 'reformed this indifferently among them,'—and we only add, 'Oh! let them reform it altogether'

We proceed to notice some of the pictures which afforded us the greatest pleasure.

Portraits of Mrs. Cowley and Son, by Mr. Dawe, is a picture of very considerable merit. There is a fine, broad, Roman expression in the face of the mother, and the child is full of animation. The satin drapery of the mother, though well executed, sits too close, and the shadows are dingy.—*A Portrait of Dr. Parr*, by the same Artist, is an admirable and striking likeness. The attitude and composition of this portrait are peculiarly happy. There is, however, in the *tout ensemble*, a want of grace and suavity, the shadows are opaque, and form an interruption to the effect, and the hands (and we would add, as a general remark, the extremities in this artist's pictures) are very carelessly executed, or seem as if they were.

There is an excellent likeness of the same Gentleman, *Dr. Parr*, by J. J. Halls.

A pleasing *Landscape* by Bigg

Cupid Stung by a Bee—West. We do not hesitate to express it as our opinion, that Mr West is admirable only in composition. His execution, his expression, his drawing, his everything else, is bad. He is only great by the acre. In a subject like the present he has not room to turn himself. Where should he find the Graces to paint Venus? Where

the curled dimples to paint Cupids? Not in straight lines or formal measurements.

Portrait of Lord Castlereagh, by Lawrence, is not a likeness. It has a smug, smart, upstart, haberdasher look, of which there is nothing in Lord Castlereagh. The air of the whole figure is direct, and forward; there is nothing, as there ought to be, characteristically circuitous, involved, and parenthetical in it. Besides, the features are cast in quite a different mould. As a bust, Lord Castlereagh's is one of the finest we have ever seen; it would do for one of the Roman Emperors, bating the expression.

Woodcock Shooting, by R. Reinagle. An admirable and characteristic composition.

We cannot praise Sir W. Beechey's *Hebe*; nor Mr Thomson's *Thais*.

A Wandering Stag—P. Reinagle—seems to have lost, not only its way, but all resemblance to its former state, that is, it does not look in the least like a stag.

A Portrait of Lady Leicester in the Character of Hope, by Lawrence, is equally commonplace in the thought and the expression. There is not the slightest trace in the picture of the sentiment contained in the divine lines from Spencer, with which it is accompanied.

Calypso with her Nymphs Caressing Cupid—T. Stothard. Though neither the colouring nor the expression of this picture is natural, there is a harmony and a gusto in both that pleases the eye and reconciles the understanding to it. We cannot say the same of his *Euphrosyne*, which appears to us a violent and unmeaning caricature.

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Portraits of a Zebu Bull and Cow, by A. Cooper. A very fine and accurate delineation of nature.

An exquisite picture of *Lord Chief Justice Gibbs*, by Owen.—This picture is a fine, true, and characteristic portrait, having all the essential peculiarities, as well as the general forms of nature in it. We really cannot see why the details are inconsistent with the general effect in a picture more than in nature, though they are represented as being so by a great authority. The portraits of *Lord Ashburnham* and *Lady Warrender*, by the same Artist, deserve more praise than we have time or ability to bestow upon them.

Portrait of a Nobleman in the Dress of an Albanian, by T. Phillips, and *Portrait of a Nobleman*, seem to be the same individual. They are both fine. They are said to be the portrait of Lord Byron, though in that case we do not see why they should be incognito. They are too smooth, and seem, as it were ‘barbered ten times o’er,’ both in the face and the expression. Here is, however, much that conveys the idea of the softness and the wildness of character of the popular poet of the East.

Eurydice hurried back to the Infernal Regions. We were less pleased with this picture on a second view of it than we were struck with it at the first.

Dido and Æneas, by J. M. W. Turner. This picture, powerful and wonderful as it is, has all the characteristic splendour and confusion of an Eastern composition. It is not natural nor classical.

Bird Catching, by Collins. The effect of this picture is almost magical. The idea of immediate distance given to the top of the bank where the

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nets are laid, is beyond anything we have ever seen

Two *Landscapes*, by J Wilson, are both pleasing pictures.

Dunbarton Castle, by Nasmith, an admirable specimen of the minute and finished style of landscape painting.

View on the Clyde, by the Rev. R Lancaster, and *Wood Scene*, by the same, are true copies from nature.

BRITISH INSTITUTION

THE Directors of this Institution have conferred an obligation on the country and the art, by the present selection of the Works of Hogarth, Wilson, Gainsborough, and Zoffani. To the public in general, it must be highly gratifying to be able to review so many of the productions of these celebrated painters: and in the artist, and the lover of art, they must excite a ~~and~~ deeper feeling of interest ~~than~~ that which is connected with mere amusement or curiosity. There is nothing more interesting to those who devote their lives to the pursuit of fame, than the security of the tenure by which it is held, and the expectations raised by every fresh rival to which it is brought, in passing through the ordeal of public taste, must be mingled with some degree of solicitude for the event. The reputation of such artists as Reynolds, Gainsborough, and Wilson, may be said to form an intermediate link between momentary popularity and the fame of the old masters; and it is gratifying to feel the gradations through which the hand of time transmits the admiration of rare genius, mellowed and refined in its course, to posterity. These remarks indeed apply to the works of Hogarth, only as far as they are pictures; for as to their reputation as compositions, it is scarcely possible to add to, or take away from it.

It has received a sanction, which it would be vain to dispute, in the universal delight and admiration with which his works have been regarded from their first appearance to the present moment. If the quantity of amusement, or of matter for reflection which they have afforded, is that by which we are to judge of precedence among the intellectual benefactors of mankind, there are, perhaps, few persons who can put in a stronger claim to our gratitude than Hogarth. It is not hazarding too much to assert that he was one of the greatest comic geniuses that ever lived, and he was certainly one of the most extraordinary men this country has produced. The wonderful knowledge which he possessed of human life and manners is only to be surpassed (if it can be) by the power of invention with which he has combined and contrasted his materials in the most ludicrous and varied points of view, and by the mastery of execution with which he has embodied and made tangible the very thoughts and passing movements of the mind. Critics sometimes object to the style of Hogarth's pictures, or to the class to which they belong. First, he belongs to no class, or if he does, it is to the same class as Fielding, Smollett, Vanbrugh, or Molière. Besides, the merit of his pictures does not depend on the nature of the subject, but on the knowledge displayed of it, on the number of ideas they excite, on the fund of thought and observation contained in them. They are to be studied as works of science as well as of amusement: they satisfy our love of truth; they fill up the void in the mind; they form a series of plates of natural history, and of that most

interesting part of natural history, the history of our own species. Make what deductions you please for the vulgarity of the subject—yet in the research, the profundity, the absolute truth and precision of the delineation of character; in the invention of incident, in wit and humour; in the life, with which they are ‘instinct in every part;’ in everlasting variety and originality, they never have, and probably never will be surpassed. They stimulate the faculties as well as soothe them. ‘Other pictures we see, Hogarth’s we read!’¹

There is one error which has been sometimes entertained on this subject, and which one would think an examination of the present collection would be sufficient to dissipate, namely, that Hogarth’s genius was confined to the imitation of the coarse humours and broad farce of low life. But he excelled quite as much in exhibiting the vices, the folly, and the frivolity of the fashionable manners of his time. His fine ladies do not yield to his waiting-maids, and his lords and footmen maintain a very respectable equality. There is no want, for example, in the *Marriage à la Mode*, or *Taste in High Life*, of affectation verging into idiotcy, or languid sensibility that might

‘Die of a rose in aromatic pain.’

Many of Hogarth’s characters would form admirable illustrations of Pope’s *Satires*, which are not considered as vulgar. In short, Hogarth was strictly a painter of actual, not of low life. He was a

¹ See an admirable essay on this subject, in a periodical work lately published, under the title of *The Reflector*

satirist, and, consequently, his pencil could not dwell on the abstract and ideal, but it glanced with equal success at the vices and follies of high or low life, 'of the great vulgar and the small'

It has been doubted whether the superiority of Hogarth was confined to his prints, or whether he had not great and almost equal merit as a painter. There has been considerable difference of opinion on this question, for which the pictures now at the Institution will easily account. The earlier specimens are evidently inferior to those of a later period, both in colour and execution, even some of those from which the finest of the prints are taken, such as *The Election Dinner*, *The Charring the Member*, &c. As mere pictures, they are raised very little above the standard of common sign-painting, whereas, it is almost impossible to speak too highly of the mechanical excellence of some of the later works, and particularly of the *Marriage à la Mode*, which, in richness, harmony, and clearness of tone, and in truth, accuracy, and freedom of pencilling, would stand a comparison with the best productions of the Dutch school. In this series Hogarth evidently considered colour as a systematic and integrant part of his art. There is the most elaborate nicety, as well as felicity, often observable in the arrangement and opposition of colour, as in the red of the chair-back next to the hair of the woman listening to the music in the third picture, the black and white dog getting upon the breakfast table in the last, the green dress of the negro boy, &c. The view of the outer room in the second

picture is in a style of the most exquisite and airy splendour. Among the portraits to which curiosity will be directed, are one of Miss Fenton (afterwards Duchess of Bolton), a beautiful and elegant head, and a whole length of Captain Coram, of which the character, composition, and colouring, are admirable. The *Sigismunda* has been censured as a vulgar composition, and cited as a proof that Hogarth could not raise his imagination above the standard of common life and actual observation. On the contrary, it appears to us to be painted in the true spirit of fine history—to be delicate in the execution, and refined in the expression, at once beautiful and impassioned, and though not in the first, probably in the second class of picture of this description.

The pictures of Zoffani in the Collection are highly curious and interesting as *facsimiles* (for such they seem to be) of some of the most celebrated characters of the last age. Wilson's landscapes will afford a high treat to every lover of the art. In all that relates to the gradation of tint, to the graceful conduct and proportions of light and shade, and to the fine, deep, and harmonious tone of nature, they are models for the student. His Italian landscapes are perhaps the best. In these his eye seems almost to have drank in the light. Neither his English scenes nor his historical compositions give us equal pleasure.

Gainsborough's pictures did not altogether answer the expectations we had formed of them. They often display a considerable degree of taste, feeling, and fancy, particularly in the choice of the subject ;

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but we cannot disguise our opinion that they often border upon *manner*, and have a certain affectation, flimsiness, and flutter in the execution, which injure the beauty and simple effect of the original composition.

MR. WEST'S PICTURE OF CHRIST REJECTED

IT must, doubtless, afford considerable triumph to the sanguine admirers of English art to reflect, that in coming out from the rich collection of Hogarth's works, at present exhibited at the British Gallery,—whether they turn to the right or the left, they can hardly fail to meet with works nearly as much, if not more, to their taste. On the one hand, there is Mr. Westall's Gallery, the elegant antithesis to the style of Hogarth, where, instead of that originality of character which excludes a nice attention to general forms, we have all that beauty of form which excludes the possibility of character; the refined essence and volatilized spirit of art, without any of the *caput mortuum* of nature, and where, instead of her endless variety, peculiarities and defects, we constantly meet with the same classical purity and undeviating simplicity of idea—one sweet smile, one heightened bloom diffused over all. On the other hand, in turning to Mr. West's Great Picture, we are struck with all that grandeur of subject, magnitude of proportion, regularity of design,—and, in short, with everything, which is not to be found in Hogarth—*except character and expression*!

It is with some little reluctance that we are led to offer the following strictures on the last and

MR. WEST'S PICTURE OF CHRIST

greatest work of this celebrated and highly respectable artist. Seriously, we cannot agree with the account given by some of our contemporaries of the rank which his picture is destined to hold in the art ; and still less with the account which Mr West himself gives of it. The objections which we shall have to make, ought indeed to be considered as applying rather to the *Catalogue* which accompanies the picture, than to the *Picture* itself. The merits and defects of a composition on so extended a scale, might very well have been left to speak for themselves, or at least we should have looked at them 'more indifferently' if Mr. West had not come forward, as the *Bayes* of his own performance, to 'insinuate the plot' into the spectator, and to spread a veil of solemn mystery and religious awe over his performance, which is calculated to impose on the most sober judgment and the most practised eye. There is no degree of extravagant and absurd presumption, which a certain well-concerted gravity of manner will not in general conceal from ourselves as well as others. Mr. West, in the present instance, without any apparent sense of impropriety, represents his grand work as if it were of a class by itself ; places it on a level with the sublimity of Scripture ; professedly enters the lists with hallowed prophets and holy evangelists, informs us that he has here undertaken 'the delineation of nearly the whole scale of human passions, from the basest to those which partake most of the divine nature,'—and concludes in the following mingled strain of piety and loyalty :—'Mr. West feels that he should be deficient in his gratitude to the

MR. WEST'S PICTURE OF CHRIST.

Supreme Being, who gave and continued to him life and health, and to his King, who graciously bestowed on him the requisite means of exertion in the exalted department of historical painting, if he did not embrace this favourable opportunity to acknowledge these invaluable favours. They have enabled him to present this picture as his Fiftieth Annual Exhibition to the Public, without an omission—his forty-seventh under his Majesty's benign patronage, and the third under his Royal Highness the Prince Regent, who has been graciously pleased to honour this Picture, and the Arts, with his protection.

Now this is fulsome. We do not know whether the Public will join in this thanksgiving of the President—but 'Amen sticks in our throats.' We can no longer wonder at being told by some friendly hand, two years ago, in the description of the picture of the *Healing of the Sick*, that that work distinctly surpassed the *Transfiguration* of Raphael, the *Raising of Lazarus* by Sebastian del Piombo, the *Taking down from the Cross* by Michael Angelo, the *St Jerome* of Domenichino, with all the other great works which had preceded it, whose collected splendour vanished into nothing before this new sun of Art,

'That seem'd another morn ris'n on mid-noon'

The real lovers of the art will always be ready to render to Mr. West the tribute of praise which is his due; but they must turn with disgust from that spurious and preposterous adulation which can only arm the resentment of criticism, and lead

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to a fastidious severity of comparison between his works and those of others, which the mediocrity of their pretensions would not otherwise call for.

The general standard of reputation, to which Mr. West's pictures may justly aspire ; the distinction between the excellencies which they almost invariably possess, and those which they as invariably want, is tolerably clear and certain. They have all that can be required in what relates to the composition of the subject ; the regular arrangement of the groupes ; the anatomical proportions of the human body ; and the technical knowledge of expression, as far as this is reducible to abstract rules, and is merely a vehicle for the telling of a story, so that anger, wonder, sorrow, pity, &c., have each their appropriate and well-known designations. These, however, are but the negative and instrumental parts of the art, the means, not the end—but beyond these, Mr. West's pictures are nothing. They never 'snatch a grace beyond the reach of Art' They exhibit only the frame and groundwork of historical compositions ; the rudiments, not the perfection of painting ; the *mask* of expression, not expression itself. Perhaps in the entire body of Mr. West's productions, however meritorious the design and composition often are, there is not to be found a single instance of exquisite sentiment, or colour, or drawing ; not one face or figure, hand or eye, which can be dwelt upon as an essence in its kind, as carrying truth, or beauty, or grandeur, to that height of excellence to which they have been sometimes carried, and beyond which the mind has no wish or conception

MR. WEST'S PICTURE OF CHRIST.

that they should go. In fact, Mr. West's pictures are made up of a great quantity of indifferent materials, formally put together. Sir Joshua Reynolds lays it down, that in Art many little things can never make one great one. Mr. West, on the contrary, seems to suppose that a hundred very bad portraits make a very fine historical picture. But history includes portrait-painting, and is only *imaginary* portrait-painting. It is not very conceivable how, without the power of copying nature as it is, there should be the power of copying it as it ought to be. 'If we love not our brother whom we have seen,' &c. All the great historical painters have been great portrait-painters,—or as that formidable coverer of formidable canvases, the late Mr. Barry, contemptuously expresses it, 'had a knack of face-painting.' Without faces, one of these 'Epic' compositions is not a picture, but a map.

To proceed to the Catalogue. 'For such a subject as the present,' says our auto-critic, 'an epic composition was demanded for it seemed every way proper, that the principal characters in the history, as well as the Divine Chief himself, should be brought together on the canvass, and represented by the pencil, as they had been described by the hallowed Prophets and Holy Evangelists.' And again 'It has been Mr. West's object, in the delineation of this subject, to excite feelings in the Spectator similar to those produced by a perusal of the Sacred Texts, which so pathetically describe these awful events.'

This certainly ought to have been Mr. West's

MR. WEST'S PICTURE OF CHRIST

object, in his version of the sacred text into the language of the pencil, but we cannot say that we find any of the spirit of the original in the translation. To begin with the figure of our Saviour—‘whom the pencil has wished to represent as standing with a divine composure, while with a dignified and mute pensiveness and resignation, he is absorbed in the grandeur of the end, for which he came into the world’ Such is Mr. West’s own account: and, ‘so should his anticipation prevent our discovery,’ but we cannot find that the execution answers to the intention,—for instead of the image of the divine nature, shrouded in the veil of humanity,—of the understanding of the Son of God tempering the passions and anguish of the heart of man,—Mr. West has presented us with a naked, shivering, dough-baked figure, that looks ‘like a sick girl.’ In aiming to give the extremes of sublimity and pathos, the artist has missed both; and for the awful tranquillity of the Saviour of the World, has given the mawkish insensibility of the hero of a whining love-tale. Pilate is better, and is probably as good a representative of the Roman Governor as a Roman actor on the stage would have been, crowned with a wreath of laurel. Caiaphas, the high priest, has a great deal of force, prominence, and spirit, both in the painting, action, and expression, though we by no means think the latter of the epic kind. By this word, *epic*, we can understand nothing but powerful passion combined with powerful intellect. Now we do not find these constituents of the epic style in the present instance. The character is coarse and violent. We do not

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hesitate to say, that the best part of the picture is the groupe of Pharisees, &c., immediately behind the chief priest. The different modes of malignity, cunning, &c., are indicated with considerable variety and precision: and we conceive that these heads are evidently better for having been less painted over, so that the original lines and markings have not been lost in the sweeping facility of the President's pencil, they are only just put in with a sort of dead colour. As for the rest of the figures, in the foreground, Joseph of Arimathea, James the Less, St. Peter, Mary Magdalen, the Third Mary, and the other women from Galilee,—‘in the midst of whom,’ says Mr. West, ‘stands the beloved disciple, supporting the Mother of Jesus, a presentation in unison with our Saviour's words to his Mother when he was on the Cross’,—we cannot say that they ‘excite in us feelings similar to those produced by a perusal of the sacred text.’—What are the feelings, then, which they do excite in us?—Why, really, if it did not look like an abuse of the liberty of the press—we should say, that so far from answering to our ideas of the epic style, Joseph of Arimathea reminds us of a respectable elderly country gentleman in the gallery of the House of Commons, listening to a speech of Lord Castle-reagh's,—James the Less is a pert yeoman's son, thrusting himself forward to see a trial at Guildhall, or the humours of an election dinner,—St. Peter is a poor old man, who has had his goods distrained for rent,—Mary Magdalen would do for one of the sprawling figures, Ceres, or Juno, or Minerva, that we see at the head of ships of war,—the Third Mary

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is a clumsy copy from one of the numbers of the *Belle Assemblée*, the old woman close to her, a romantic washerwoman, with grisled locks, worse 'than our maid's aunt of Brentford,'—or than the old woman in Fontaine,—and the rest of the female groupe are of the same stamp, except one, standing behind, in a flowing purple diaphery, and with a neck and fine side-face, which (for a wonder) seem 'made of penetrable stuff' If there was anything in the world which could have touched Mr. West's pencil, it must have been the intense feeling, and 'power of love sublime,' conveyed in the passage which he has had the temerity to quote.—'Woman, behold thy Son, and turning to the beloved disciple—Behold, thy Mother.' We have some old recollections, some yearnings of tenderness connected with this passage, which, if Mr West had in the most distant way recalled, we should have thanked him; but no such thing Mr. West's mind is without that master-key, which moves in concert with the imagination. But what shall we say to the Good Centurion, who is bringing in his young and amiable family? Nothing, but that we do not see any gold or silver medals, testaments, or spelling-books to be given away to good boys and girls,—or to the *fantoccini* figures of Herod and his men of war, and Pilate's wife in the gallery? Nothing, but that Mr. West should either see Paul Veronese's *Marriage of Cana*; or, that if he has seen it, he should never paint another gallery,—or to the armed soldiers and the executioner sitting on the cross in the foreground explaining by the help of an epic nail, the nature of a crucifixion to two youths, who

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are said to be 'affected in a manner suitable to their early sensibilities?' Nothing, but that our artist should never introduce brass, or steel, or wood, into his pictures, for they are a vile index to the rest of the composition, and when the eye has caught the resemblance, it cannot soon discard it.

In describing 'the baser passions,' we are decidedly of opinion that Mr. West has succeeded better than in delineating those 'which partake most of the divine nature.' He has fairly unloaded the gibbets, and swept the streets of their scum. Falstaff could not boast of such a set of scare-crows. If Hogarth had had the same subjects, he would, at least, have *humanized* them!

This article has run to a tedious length, partly from the respect which we owe to Mr. West, and partly from the respect which we owe to ourselves. We might sum up our opinion in one word, by saying, that there is in the present picture an absolute want of what is called *gusto* throughout; nor can we describe our idea of Mr. West's style in general better than by saying that it is the reverse of Raphael's. The difference is this. In Raphael, every muscle and nerve has intense feeling. The same divine spirit breathes from every part; it either agitates the inmost frame, or plays in gentle undulations on the trembling surface. Whether we see his figures bending with all the blandishments of maternal love, or standing in the motionless silence of thought, or hurried into the tumult of action, the whole is bursting with expression. But Mr. West makes no use whatever of the movable frame

MR. WEST'S PICTURE OF CHRIST

of the countenance, the only language it possesses ; he sees and feels nothing in the human face but bones and cartilages : or if he does avail himself of this flexible machinery, it is only by rule and method. The effect is not that which the soul of passion impresses on it, and which the soul of genius alone can seize ; but such as might be given to wooden puppets or pasteboard figures, pulled by wires, and taught to open the mouth, or knit the forehead, or raise the eyes with a great deal of significance. It is not the hardness of the outline, but the want of inflection in the lines themselves, of *malleability* in the very texture of the countenance, that is the real and insurmountable objection to Mr. West's pictures, which are not of the epic but of the didactic kind ; not poetry, but prose.

These remarks may probably be regarded as not sufficiently liberal and patriotic. We do not think, however, that in a national point of view, we can establish our pretensions to genius by shewing our want of taste ; and we think it right, for the sake of the art itself, not to disguise our opinion, that the effect of Mr. West's pictures must be to mislead the young student to prefer quantity to quality, and to suppose that the excellence of the picture is necessarily in proportion to the grandeur of the subject, and the extent of the canvass.

DRAMATIC CRITICISMS

MISS O'NEILL

COVENT GARDEN, *Nov. 6, 1814*

MISS O'NEILL in *Belvidera* and in *Isabella*, which she played on Friday night, gains upon the public opinion. In both these characters she has surpassed the expectations we had formed from her *Juliet*, and has, we conceive, fully established her reputation. It is not easy to convey an idea of an actress who has no peculiar defects, and whose excellence is nearly uniform. She is by far the most impressive tragic actress we have seen since Mrs. Siddons, nor do we think that the expression of domestic and feminine distress can well be carried farther. As she has been compared (and with some appearance of reason) to Mrs. Siddons, we shall attempt to describe the difference between them. This is scarcely greater in the form, features, and tone of voice, than in the expression of the internal workings of the mind. In Mrs. Siddons, passion was combined with lofty imagination and commanding intellect. Miss O'Neill owes everything to extreme sensibility. In her *Belvidera* and *Isabella*, you see the natural feelings of tenderness and grief, worked up to madness by accumulated misfortune. She gives herself up entirely to the impression of circumstances, is borne along the tide

of passion, and absorbed in her sufferings. She realizes all that is suggested by the progress of the story, and answers the utmost expectation of the spectator, but she seldom goes beyond it. She does not lift the imagination out of itself. Every nerve is strained, her frame is convulsed, her breath suspended, her forehead knit together, fate encloses her round, and seizes on his struggling victim. Nothing can be more natural or more affecting than her noble conception of the part. But still there is not that terrible reaction of mental power on the scene, which forms the perfection of tragedy, whether in acting or writing. It was those reaches of the soul, in which it looks down on its sufferings, in which it rises superior to nature and fortune, and gathers strength and grandeur from its despair, that gave such majesty and power to Mrs. Siddons' acting. She seemed formed for scenes of terror and agony, and fit to contend with them, and then only to possess the full plenitude and expansion of her being. Her acting left a weight upon the mind, and overpowered the faculties, as sleep oppresses infants. For characters and situations of pure natural interest we can conceive no one better qualified than Miss O'Neill, and while she is equal to filling the highest parts, she may descend to others, which Mrs. Siddons could not certainly have played with advantage.

We have already spoken of Miss Foote in the character of Amanthus. Her acting in the *Forest of Bondy* is equally delightful. We have seldom seen anything more graceful, or full of gay and innocent *naïveté*, than her coquetry with Florio about the

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kiss in the first scene. She has in this piece another lover of singular attractions, which she was insensible enough to withstand. This was no other than Mr Liston, the Orlando of ostlers, and Romeo of amorous rustics. Whether incited by the loveliness of the fair object of his sighs, he adorned his person with more than usual airs and graces. He wore a loose flowing flaxen wig on the occasion, which fell over his shoulders, and as he moved with graceful ease backwards and forwards, the golden locks waved up and down, as Homer has described Apollo's. Surrounded with this ornamental addition, his face looked as round as an apple, and his eyes glistened with pleasure. There is an oily richness of expression which trickles down this gentleman's face, and makes it shine all over with gladness. His nose looks just as if it were tickled with a tythepig's tail, and his chin makes a comfortable cushion for a jest. His voice is rich with 'very excellent conceit,' he sings with good emphasis and discretion, and dances (what no one perhaps ever did before) like a man of genius. The difference between Mr. Liston and some other popular actors, that we could name, is that they make all sorts of grimaces, and strain every feature to make you laugh : whereas he seems bursting with some excellent joke, which he cannot keep to himself for the life of him. It has been objected with some truth that he is rather a humourist than an actor : if he is not a copy of any one but himself, he is at least an exquisite original and wonderfully great in the character of Liston !

Miss Stephens played Rosina at this Theatre

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on Tuesday, and charmed her audience. She sings more sweetly and with more power than ever. We leave the air of 'Sweet Bird' to the learned critic, but we have never been more delighted than with her singing 'While with Village Maids I Stray.' She added new graces to the tune, always simple, and always elegant : and the continued flow of melodious sound

. . . in many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,'

resembled the murmuring of waters flowing in circling eddies. Mr. Duruset improves greatly in his singing, and might improve still more in his acting. Miss Matthews minces her words as prettily, and trips across the stage as archly as ever.

MRS. SIDDONS

DRURY LANE, *April 30, 1817*

THE tragedy of *Macbeth* was repeated here last night, for the purpose of introducing Mrs. Hill, from the Belfast Theatre, as Lady Macbeth. Though this lady's performance of the part cannot be censured as a failure, it can hardly be regarded as a successful experiment; for to succeed in Lady Macbeth requires something above mediocrity—something more than acting by rote. Mrs. Hill did not remind us of Mrs. Siddons, as Miss Bartley painfully does, but she reminds us of Miss Somerville, which is still less to be desired. She has the same deep internal articulation in some of her tones, and the same romantic, softened, sing-song cadence in others. This false alternation of the tones of the voice was not occasional but pervaded her whole delivery. One of the first instances was when Lady Macbeth, in reading the letter, says, 'When I demanded to know more of them, *they made themselves into air*;' which last words Mrs. Hill gave with a smile of half wonder, and in a tremulous sighing accent. Mrs. Siddons used to give this passage indeed with a slight pause, with a start of surprise, but with nothing of this melting musical indifference. This lady's face is not regular, nor

does her person possess much tragic grace: her action has little variety or force. In the banquet scene she wanted that sustained dignity which we have been used to look for in this part. She was, however, received favourably throughout, nor was there any part of her acting that could excite a strong or pointed expression of disapprobation: this negative praise is all we can give to it. Expectation was excited, as it always is on these occasions; for who would not wish to see another Mrs. Siddons? who would not wish to be present when a successor worthy of her should appear for the first time on the English stage? A tragic actress may some time or other arise to play the same parts as she played them: and whenever a candidate is announced for that high place which she filled in the public mind, for her proud throne in the human heart, an involuntary impulse tempts us to the theatre, in the hope that *this may* be she. We have never made any approach to the realization of this wish but in a single instance. Miss O'Neill is almost half a Mrs. Siddons, yet she is not a Lady Macbeth. The character remained to be filled up, and it still remains to be so. Not that we regret this circumstance for ourselves,—we remember Mrs. Siddons in it, and that is enough for us. It was the first character in which we ever saw her, and the recollection of the impression which she then made upon us is not strengthened by its having been also the last in which we saw her. To have seen her in that character but once, was never to forget her afterwards. It was no more possible to forget her than if we had seen some more than

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mortal vision. It was as if the Muse of Tragedy had descended to awe us into wonder. Her voice was power : her form was grandeur. Her person was the mould which her lofty and gigantic spirit alone could fill. Her face lightened with awful beauty. We forget many things one after another , year by year takes away from the list of our remembrances , but the impression which Mrs. Siddons first made on our minds can never wear out.

MR. KEAN

DRURY LANE, *May 15, 1817*

THE *Surrender of Calais* was performed here last night; the part of Eustace de St Pierre by Mr. Kean. We do not well understand why he was selected for this character, or why the character was selected for him. It is not enough to say, that it was the least successful of his dramatic efforts (the least successful of them might still be brilliant), but there was scarcely a single point which came in contact with his peculiar excellences. For Mr. Kean merely to walk through his part like an ordinary actor, is for him to do nothing. he must have opportunities to shine, and even (we may add) to fail as no other man can do, or he is not himself. The character of Eustace de St. Pierre is that of a plain, blunt man, who is a good citizen, but no actor: who hides, indeed, an heroic spirit, and a tender heart, under a rough, unaccommodating exterior; but whose homely, unaffected sincerity makes him suppress every burst of passion that might seem like ostentation, and every demonstration of the most obvious and natural feelings the moment they rise in his breast. The author has, in fact, been guilty of a transposition of national character. The hero of his story is not essentially French, but an Englishman

in downright earnest, and there is nothing less dramatic than the plain, sober, direct, unpretending simplicity of the English character. The stern stuff of which the bosom of Eustace de St. Pierre is composed is very little calculated for theatrical display: the poet has kept the groundwork of the character dark and sullen, nor did it burnish out in the hands of Mr. Kean. The only substitute for the want of passion and expression in such a character would be an appearance of personal dignity, proud in the consciousness of its integrity, but this Mr. Kean wants; and there was little or nothing else by which he could produce an effect upon the audience. Once or twice, however, the natural severity of his voice and countenance relaxed into a momentary expression of tremulous tenderness; as where, after giving the old man the loaf of bread to prolong his daughter's life, he says, hiding his tears, 'The wind affects mine eyes,' and again, in the interview with his son, before he is led to the scaffold, when he breaks hastily from him with an involuntary confession of his weakness—'I looked not for this scene.' These, however, were but faint glimmerings of 'those flashes of his spirit by which he is wont' to irradiate every countenance, and kindle every breast within the circle of his influence, to 'a flame of sacred sympathy.' In the latter scenes of the play Mr. Kean still kept up the same severe tone in the character, when perhaps he should have altered it with the circumstances in which he is placed. Coldness and indifference should have given place to heroic enthusiasm. A true patriot, devoting himself for his country, is

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lifted far above all competition or bitterness, in the elevation of its feelings, in the exultation of its triumph. Mr. Kean would, therefore, we think, have done more justice to himself and to the character, if, in the scene with the Governor of Calais, where he offers himself as a sacrifice, he had been hurried into a tone of more impassioned eloquence, and in that where he delivers up the keys of the city gates to the conqueror, had described the horrors and sufferings of the siege with a voice of indignant humanity, without assuming the tones of personal sarcasm against the English king. Harley was pleasant as La Gloire, but we are old enough to remember Bannister in the part.

MRS. ALSOP

DRURY LANE, *May 23, 1817*

THE farce of *The Romp* was revived here last night, for the purpose of introducing Mrs. Alsop as Priscilla Tomboy. In all the mischievousness, vivacity, and vulgarity of the part, Mrs. Alsop was eminently successful. it was only in the rich, genial, vinous spirit which her mother threw over it, and made this and all her characters so delightful, that Mrs. Alsop failed, if it could be considered as a failure in any one merely not to do what Mrs. Jordan did. Mrs. Alsop's voice is clear and articulate in a very high degree, her humour is arch and pointed; she gives a great deal of life and motion to the parts in which she acts, without running into extravagance; and in a character like the present, her face and figure are not very much against her. The pleasure we received from her acting in *The Romp* had hardly any drawback, and she gave to several of the scenes a highly comic effect. The song, 'Oh! how I wish I was married,' in which she sings a kind of lullaby to a doll dressed up as a little baby, and that in which she turns her sweetheart, Watty Cockney, out of the house, were exceedingly ludicrous and piquant. Her boxing with her discarded lover, in the last scene, was perhaps carrying the joke a little too far

for the refinement of modern times, but this was the fault of the author, not of the actress. Knight, as Watty Cockney, strutted, jerked, and fidgetted, and smirked about the stage as usual, and with some drollery of effect; but he was not exactly the unconscious, blundering, self-conceited, booby coxcomb, which we expect to see. Knight's excellence is not humour, but vivacity. We laugh at him in his best characters, not from the absurdity of his feelings or pretensions, but from his ludicrous haste to be doing something, from his being the sport of his animal spirits, and kept in constant unnecessary motion by the tingling of his blood. His humour, where he has it, is that of pure *navvété*; or his absurdities arise from simplicity, not from affectation, and accordingly, he did not make much of the character of Watty Cockney, which is an essence of ignorance and vanity combined. Gattie made an excellent representative of Old Barnacle; and Miss Mangeon, as Penelope, made a very pretty insipid mediator between her brother Watty and her cousin Priscilla Tomboy, between whom it was often necessary to keep the peace. The farce was well received, and deserved to be so, if the test of a good farce consists in its making us laugh heartily.

MR. KEAN'S BENEFIT

DRURY LANE, *May 27, 1817*

MR. KEAN had for his benefit last night *Barbarossa*, and the musical afterpiece of *Paul and Virginia*. The house was crowded to excess. The part of Achmet in the tragedy afforded but little scope for the development of Mr Kean's great talents. The only scene which had a striking and brilliant effect, was that in which the young prince in disguise discovers himself to Barbarossa, the murderer of his father, in the presence of his mother. The heroic intrepidity with which he braves the fury of the tyrant, as it relates to himself, and the tenderness of his supplication in behalf of his mother, excited a burst of powerful but transient sympathy in the audience. The rest of the play went off very flatly. The characters were in general cast as badly as possible—not, we suppose, as *foils* to Mr. Kean, for that is quite unnecessary. Mr. Bengough played Barbarossa. This gentleman has had the ingenuity to make us regret Mr. Pope. In the afterpiece of *Paul and Virginia*, which we suspect was the chief attraction of the evening, Mr. Kean sang several songs in a clear, finely-toned voice, and with considerable taste and delicacy of execution. He was rapturously *encored* in most of them. If we were

MR. KEAN'S BENEFIT

disposed to be critical, we should say that his style of singing is not so natural and genuine as his style of acting. A great tragic actor, however, who undertakes to sing, may be excused if he is a little ambitious to show that he knows *how to sing*. Mr. Kean certainly showed that he was not deficient in any of the airs and graces of the art. He trilled, and quavered, and warbled very delightfully, but it was a little too much in the style of Incledon. Mr. Incledon does not act like Mr. Kean—why should Mr. Kean sing like Mr. Incledon? Miss Mangeon was the Virginia. The music of this opera by Mazzinghi is pleasing, and we had rather the piece had been given out for repetition to-morrow evening than the tragedy of *Barbarossa*, which will make but a very indifferent substitute for Sir Giles Overreach.

MR. KEMBLE

COVENT GARDEN, *May* 31, 1817

MR KEMBLE played the character of Posthumus last night (as it was announced in the bills) for the last time. We do not wish to see Mr. Kemble play any of his characters for the last time; but if it is not intended to be so, we do not like to have it so announced. We 'begin to doubt the équivocation' of the managers in their constant appeals, not to our hopes, but our fears; and are apprehensive that we may lose Mr. Kemble in some of his last appearances, from not knowing when to trust to these farewell predictions. Posthumus is not one of Mr. Kemble's most prominent characters; for it does not abound in the theatrical exhibition of classical costume or personal grandeur. Still it affords opportunities for the display of that dignity of manner for which this accomplished actor is scarcely less remarkable, and for that impressive vehemence of declamation in delineating the force of any strong impulse or single purpose, in which he succeeds much better than in describing the conflict and fluctuations of different passions. Perhaps Mr. Kemble is unequal to the expression of the jealousy of Othello, the heights and depths of his love, his madness, his tenderness, and his

despair, the alternate bursts of all those passions that tear his bosom like a hurricane, by which it is tossed to and fro like the sea ; but he is equal to the representation of the jealousy of Posthumus, which is mingled with no other feeling than that of resentment against the imputations thrown on the chastity of his mistress and when these imputations are converted into apparent proofs against her, is entirely occupied in aggravating its sense of injury and in executing its purpose of revenge. In the two leading scenes with Iachimo, Mr. Kemble was highly impressive. in the first, in exhibiting the lofty and delicate sensibility of wounded pride, in the second, the stronger and more irregular workings of heart-felt passion. His impatient rejection of Iachimo's first proofs of his wife's infidelity, and his subsequent eagerness to get rid of the tortures of suspense, by rejecting all doubts of their truth, were conceived and expressed with equal truth and felicity. In the last scene, in which, after Iachimo has confessed the wrongs he has done to him, he comes forward and says ' Behold him here ' we thought Mr. Kemble failed in characteristic energy and impetuosity. His sudden appearance should have blasted his hated rival like the lightning's flash—his voice should have startled him like a thunderbolt. Mr. Kemble made his approaches too slowly, too deliberately, after too much hesitation, and the effect at last was feeble and unimpassioned. Upon the whole, however, we consider Posthumus, though not one of the most striking, as one of his most unexceptionable performances ; allowing for the necessary deficiency

M R . K E M B L E

of youthful grace in Mr Kemble's figure, and for his constitutional coldness as a lover in the scenes with his mistress. Mr. Young played the part of Iachimo exceedingly well. The rest of the play was indifferently cast. Miss Foote's Imogen is not the Imogen of Shakspeare.

MISS O'NEILL'S BENEFIT

COVENT GARDEN, *June 9, 1817*

MISS O'NEILL had a full house at her benefit on Saturday. Of the mild graces and simple pathos of her Mrs. Haller it is needless to speak. Her power in this character is best shown in the tears that suffuse the eyes of her fair auditors, in the tenderness that steals upon and melts every heart. Mr. Kemble's Stranger is one of his most perfect and characteristic parts. Even his defects are indirectly converted into excellences. A deep fixed melancholy sits upon his brow; hope has long left his worn and faded cheek; his still and motionless despair has almost changed him to a statue, but he has not quite 'forgot himself to stone.' A sigh of involuntary tenderness heaves his stately form, and shows that there is life in it; a tear, 'unused to flow,' stands ready to start from either eye; a pang of bitter regret quivers on his lip, his tremulous hollow voice, labouring out its irksome way, seems to give back the echo of years of departed hope and happiness. He is like a sentiment embodied. a long habit of patient suffering, not seen but felt, appears to have subdued his mind, and moulded his whole form. We could look at Mr. Kemble in this character, and listen to him, till we could

MISS O'NEILL'S BENEFIT

fancy that every other actor is but a harlequin, and that no tones but his have true pathos, sense, or meaning in them. 'So fare thee well, old Jack!' We ought to say so. You are a very, very old friend. Our liking *The Stranger* so well was, we believe, one reason why we laughed so heartily at *Katherine and Petruchio*, which followed. We never saw Miss O'Neill to such advantage in comedy. We never saw her get under a table before. She really makes a very formidable and spirited shrew, and, after some ineffectual struggles, she gives in her submission very prettily at last. Mr. Young is an excellent Petruchio; and the whole farce went off with the greatest *éclat*. The Miss Dennetts danced in a new divertissement for the occasion.

MRS. ALSOP AND MRS. JORDAN

DRURY LANE, *June 11, 1817*

MRS. ALSOP, had for her benefit last night *The Trip to Scarborough*, in which she played Miss Hoyden with a great deal of rustic *naïveté* and bouncing spirit; *The Devil to Pay*, in which Jobson's strap and the lamb's wool operated upon her, as Nell, very fantastically and naturally, and *The Wedding Day*, in which she did not sing the favourite song of 'The Dead of the Night' as well as she might have sung it. The house was crowded, and, by the bill of fare, it appears that the lady, as is the custom, was determined to give her friends and the public a *bumper* in return. We like to see overflowing audiences on these occasions for the sake of the actor or actress; but we confess, we shrink from these crowded bills of entertainment for our own. Two pieces, a stock tragedy or comedy, and a good afterpiece, are enough, in all conscience, to satisfy the most voracious audience. Anything beyond that is making a toil of a pleasure. We may be tired even with laughing; and we should not have been sorry to have come away immediately after Dowton's song of the two Jackdaws in *The Devil to Pay*, which we laughed at till we were heartily tired, and hope to do so again when he next sings it. Dowton

MRS. ALSOP AND MRS. JORDAN

makes a very good Jobson, though he is not equal to Bannister. Mrs. Alsop also makes a very good Nell: but Mrs. Jordan's Nell was heavenly. In that character, as in all others of the same kind, she did indeed 'take the ravished soul, and lap it in Elysium,' by her balmy voice, and her heart, which was in her voice, and which ran over with the cordial intoxication of human-kindness; and by her honest face, which shone, like the sun, with good nature:

'And glorious, total want of vile hypocrisy'

MR. MATHEWS

HAYMARKET THEATRE, *July 16, 1817*

IT was understood that Mr. Mathews was to have played Rover, in *Wild Oats*, at this theatre last night, with imitations; and as a considerable number of persons had come with a view to see this part of the performance, the unexpected apology which was made for his absence on account of indisposition did not give satisfaction to the whole house, and the substitution of Mr. Russell to act the part was not very cordially received, particularly by the galleries. We were not, however, at all sorry ourselves, for we like the part of Rover much, and were not anxious to have it burlesqued or mimicked out of our imaginations by Mr. Mathews's knack at transposition. Russell got through the part indifferently enough to excite some pain at the time, but to make no lasting impression afterwards. We think just as we did before of Elliston's manner of personifying this character; of that mixture of half-serious sentiment, of half-affected jocularity which he threw into it; of his friendly impudence getting him into scrapes, and his careless good nature floating him out of them; of his broken fortunes and laughing animal spirits; the sunshine within instantly breaking through, and dissipating the cloud gathering

MR. MATHEWS

upon his face : but Mathews would have marred all this, and made us laugh at the character as well as at himself. Mrs. Glover's Lady Amaranth is one of her best parts. There is often an exuberance in this lady's acting which the reserve of Quaker decorum happily suppresses, an *en bon point* in her manner, as well as person, which her Quaker habit in some measure hides ; and she gives to the part all the real good nature and cordiality of feeling which are concealed under its prim, leaden-coloured drapery. Mr. Tokeley's John Dory is one of his very best characters. It is a true, honest, blundering, blustering, inoffensive Jack-tar. He is natural without being coarse, and spirited without being intolerably boisterous. Mr. Butler's *Son* was not like Little Knight's, that is, it was not like what it ought to be.

July 23

Last night Mr Mathews redeemed his pledge of playing Rover in *Wild Oats*. The house was crowded to very great excess. Of his Jack Rover we shall say nothing, but that we believe it is not a character of his own choice, and he had the good sense not to burlesque it. His imitations were rapturously cheered by the house. His representation of Blanchard's Menenius was the best. Those of John Kemble, Fawcett, Munden, and Incledon were also excellent. Mr. Mathews is, and always will be, one of the greatest favourites upon the stage, if he is only satisfied with doing what he does best ; and we think an actor who gives so much pleasure to others has every reason to be pleased

MR. MATHEWS

with himself We hope he is not inconsolable for Mr Kemble's retirement from the stage. It is more than we shall be as long as we can slip, of a fine summer's evening, into the Haymarket, and see him play Somno and Scout. For our own parts, we have too much respect for Mr. Mathews's real talents to flatter him for what he is not.

WILD OATS

DRURY LANE, *Sept. 12, 1817*

THE agreeable comedy of *Wild Oats* was acted here last night, in which Mr Stanley (from the Bath Theatre) made his first appearance as Rover. He was received throughout with very considerable, and not undeserved, applause. He did not play it like Lewis, he did not play it like Elliston, but he played it better than we have seen it lately performed by anyone. This part, from its nondescript character, and quaint and undefinable mixture of odd qualities, is almost as rarely succeeded in as others of much higher pretensions either from their force or refinement. The serious alternately gives place to the comic, and the comic to the serious ; or rather they are both infused into the same situations in such doubtful quantities, that it is hard to say which should predominate. Animal spirits are the chief qualification for an actor in this part, and it is the trusting to their impulse that should float him over all its difficulties, which are more likely to be overcome by carelessness than study. Rover is a young fellow of a sound constitution, with a flighty understanding : the tide of the blood prevails in the character over the tide of genius, and the whims of fortune have more influence on his conduct than

the contrivances of his own brain. He laughs without malice; and his tone of sentiment is of the romantic and adventurous, rather than of the solemn and sickly cast. If we were to find fault with Mr. Stanley's delineation of the part, we should say that it was of too unmixed a character: his seriousness was too laboured, and he rose into vivacity with too great an effort. He seemed to repose upon the set speeches too much, as if he was loth to give over his 'face-making,' and when he came to a humorous incident, was determined to make the most of it. He did not leave Rover enough to take his chance. We preferred him very much in his forced character of Young Mr. Thunder to his professional one of a strolling player. He not only looked better for being well dressed, but played the part of the gentleman and the lover better than that of the humourist and the man of genius. He is well-made, treads the stage well, has a good-natured face, and a voice which wants neither strength nor sweetness, but he mouths a little too much, is a little too emphatical and *syllabical* in his enunciation, and is too fond of introducing 'the golden cadences of poesy' into plain speaking. We think him upon the whole, however, an acquisition to the London stage, and hope to see him in other characters, which we think will be found better adapted for the full development of his peculiar powers. We may add, that we saw this gentleman (to great advantage) in some characters at Bath, about a year ago (Young Mirabel was one of them), and could not help thinking of poor Wilson in *Humphry Clinker*. The other characters of the play

WILD OATS

were admirably got up We cannot criticise Knight's Sim. It is not acting, but perfect nature. The scene in which, after forcing his purse upon Old Banks, he continues to laugh with involuntary pleasure at his success, while he is taking an inventory of the furniture, and at last throws down his pen and ink in a passion, refusing to go on with his ungrateful task, is a masterpiece. Munden's Ephraim Smooth is as fine, in the way of demure hypocrisy, as Knight's Sim is in the expression of natural simplicity. His dress aided the character it was out of the same piece of cloth, and his whole person seemed as immovable as one of the pyramids. Ephraim is not a very loquacious character, but Mr. Munden contrives to make his face say a great deal when his characters say nothing. Dowton's Sir George Thunder was like a broadside of naval character and sea humour. In the scene in which he has the dispute with Rover, who treats him as an impostor, he is in a perfect storm of passion: his blood rushes into his face, he swears himself out of breath, his hat and wig are thrown into the greatest consternation, and his ruffled dress sympathizes with his rising anger like a turkey-cock's feathers. We missed Mrs Glover in Lady Amaranth. Mrs. Oger's Jane was excellent In the afterpiece, Mrs. Alsop played Miss Kelly's part of The Innkeeper's Daughter.

MR. MUNDEN

DRURY LANE, Sept. 15, 1817

ON Saturday, after the play of *The Rivals*, in which Mr. Rae mouthed in Captain Absolute; and Mrs. Alsop frowned in Lydia Languish, in which Dowton triumphed in Sir Antony, and Harley fluttered in Bob Acres, we had the delightful musical entertainment of the *Poor Soldier*, for the purpose of introducing a Mrs. Bellchambers (from the Bath Theatre) as Patrick. This lady has assuredly nothing masculine either in her person or manner, and, in the excess of her timidity, she appeared to shrink affrighted from the very character she had assumed. Her acting wanted the spirit which should belong to the *Poor Soldier*, and had nothing of heroism about it, either real or pretended. She failed in her first song also; but in her second and more anxious attempt, she recovered her command of herself, and gave the old favourite song 'My friend and pitcher' in a fine, deep, full, and mellow tone of voice, which we have seldom heard surpassed. Her expression was just, and her style of execution simple and natural. Munden's Darby was a rich comic treat, and was indeed required to sustain the interest of the piece, notwithstanding the romantic sweetness of many of the airs. His face was in full play, and

MR. MUNDEN

presented, in its incessant evolutions, as many malicious grimaces of an extreme unction as are to be found in a whole shop-window of caricatures. And then he *pokes out* his words just as he does his face, to make such an admirable comment on his looks. His voice is a fine oil for a jest to float in. He is an inimitable fellow! Barnard acted Dermot, and sung the 'Brown Jug' with judgment and effect. If this gentleman* does not succeed in all that he attempts (whether as an actor or a singer), he always seems to know what he ought to do. Miss Halford's Nora was not very attractive.

THE SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND

DRURY LANE, Sept. 24, 1817

WE congratulate the public on the revival at this theatre of the elegant and lively comedy of *The Suspicious Husband*. We have seldom seen a play of this cast better got up in all its parts. Mr. Pope, who has renewed his engagement here, played, Strictland in a style of easy dignity and propriety which no other actor on the stage could give to it. Mrs. Orger's Mrs. Strictland was exactly what it ought to be. Of Mr. Stanley's Ranger, we, upon the whole, think favourably, though the character, which is one made up of hairbreadth'scapes and dashing adventures, rather than of wit and sentiment, is chiefly to be carried off by an exuberance of animal spirits; and in these we do not think this actor excels. Yet some of the scenes into which he is thrown by accident were very spirited, particularly that where he surprises Mrs. Strictland, and afterwards Jacintha, in their bed-chambers; and his general air and manner was easy and good-humoured, though not gentleman-like. Our old favourite Mrs. Mardyn, as Jacintha, spoke the character very prettily and musically, and her shape was harmony itself. The managers will do well to let her wear the breeches to the end of the

THE SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND

chapter. In her female attire Mrs Mardyn perhaps has too swimming, incessant, and voluptuous a motion 'her clothes bear her up most mermaid-like,' and she makes too free and swan-like a use of her neck. Mrs. Alsop's chambermaid (Luçetta) was a clever piece of acting—forward, bold, mischievous, laughing, and more inviting than tempting. Knight's Taster was quite as good in its way, which was more remarkable for sheepishness and stupidity than impudence or wit. We did not admire Mrs Glover's Clarinda so much as some other of her characters. Harley, as Jack Meggot, chattered too much like his own monkey. This gentleman may talk as fast as he pleases, but he ought to let us distinguish what the author says. Upon the whole, we regard this play as an addition to the stock amusements of the town. It does not excel (neither is it deficient) in character, wit, or sentiment, but the situations and adventures in it, chiefly the result of Ranger's eccentric volatile humour, are truly delightful and dramatic, and the moral is unexceptionable.

Sept. 29

Mr. Stanley repeated the part of Ranger, in *The Suspicious Husband*, on Saturday night. We are now confirmed in the opinion which we at first suggested, that this performer has neither the genuine vivacity nor the manner requisite for the line of character which he has chosen. He is a bustling, well-humoured, self-assured actor, and would represent forward impudence to the life; he would shine in the footman Tom of *The Conscious*

THE SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND

Lovers, or probably in the more difficult part of Brass in *The Confederacy* ; but he is not at home as a gentleman ; he has neither the tones, nor gestures, nor carriage of good society ; he does not, we think, want merely polish, he seems to want the mind and taste requisite for such a personation. There are three things which we would especially warn him against —not to wear his cocked hat awry like a drunken sailor , not to lay all his emphasis on the few stupid oaths which are attached to the part of Ranger ; and above all, not to dance like a *figurant* at Sadler's Wells. He may be assured that Garrick did not dance so

MR. LISTON

ENGLISH OPERA-HOUSE, *Sept. 25, 1817*

THE ridiculous plan of having two sets of performances in an evening (as an humble imitation of the all-day turn-outs at Bartholomew Fair) was tried here last night with *negative success*. Hardly anybody came, and those who did come, seemed not willing to go away to make room for their fashionable successors. The idea of supposing that there are two distinct species of operatic playgoers, one whose life begins, and the other whose life expires, as the clock strikes nine at night, is as groundless as it is offensive. After the two first pieces were over, previous to this critical hour, some persons in the pit, whose 2s. worth was out, manifested signs of an inclination to stay in spite of the new arrangement. The manager was called for, and came. He made a set little speech, and was answered in a desultory way, both parties declining to understand one another. A pittance had thrown his shilling extraordinary upon the stage, which Mr Bartley did not think proper to pick up ; and upon this gentleman's representing to them the total subversion of the manager's grand plan, which would result from the determination of the first audience to sit out the second price, the malcontents slowly withdrew,

to make room for the crowd who were supposed to be waiting outside, but who did not rush in. So ended this insignificant affair.

Something better than all this was the entertainment of *Tom Thumb the Great*, which we saw the other evening at Covent-garden, when it was too late to give an account of it: for, after all, the class of persons on whom the lateness of the representations presses the hardest are the theatrical critics. When other people (be the hour what it may) are going home to bed or supper, our task is just beginning—hard task, whether it is to damn or save. But we cannot let a part like Mr. Liston's Lord Grizzle sleep in utter oblivion. What a name and what a person! It has been said of this ingenious and inimitable actor, that he is 'very great in Liston,' but he is still greater in Lord Grizzle. What a wig is that he wears! How flighty, flaunting, and fantastical! Not like 'those hanging locks of young Apollo,' nor like the serpent-hair of the Furies of Aeschylus; but as troublous, though not so tragical, as the one; as grotesque, though less classical than the others. A wag, seeing a print of the Duke of Marlborough's officers at the Battle of Blenheim in full-bottomed wigs, observed that Bonaparte might have said of them, '*Que terribles sont ces cheveux gris*,' instead of *chevaux gris* and the same exclamation might be applied to Lord Grizzle's most valiant and magnanimous curls. This sapient courtier's 'fell of hair does at a dismal treatise rouse and stir, as life were in't' His wits seem flying away with the disorder of his flowing locks, and to sit as loosely on our hero's head

as the caul of his peruke. What a significant vacancy in his open eyes and mouth ! What a listlessness in his limbs ! What an abstraction of all thought or purpose ! With what a headlong impulse of enthusiasm he throws himself across the stage, crying 'Hey for Doctors' Commons,' as if the genius of folly had taken possession of his person ! And then his dancing is equal to the discovery of a sixth sense—which is certainly very different from *common sense* ! If this extraordinary personage cuts a great figure in his lifetime, he is no less wonderful in his death and burial. We consider Mr. Liston as the greatest comic genius who has appeared in our time, and Lord Grizzle as his greatest effort 'From the sublime to the ridiculous there is but one step,' and this character would seem to prove that there is but one step *from the ridiculous to the sublime*. Lubin Log, however inimitable, is itself an imitation of something existing elsewhere. but the Lord Grizzle of this truly great actor is a pure invention of his own. His Caper, in *The Widow's Choice*, can alone compare with it in incoherence and volatility, for that too is 'high fantastical'—almost as full of emptiness, in as grand a gusto of insipidity, as profoundly absurd, as elaborately nonsensical. Why does not Mr. Liston play in some of Molière's farces ? We heartily wish that the author of *Love, Law, and Physic*, would launch him on the London boards in Monsieur Jourdain, or Monsieur Pourceaugnac. The genius of Liston and Molière together would be irresistible.

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

DRURY LANE, Oct. 22, 1817

THE *Beggar's Opera* was played here last night to a crowded and brilliant audience. Miss Byrne's Polly was the chief attraction of the evening. She had excited very favourable expectations in the character of Adela in *The Haunted Tower*, and her representation of Polly—the charming, the tender, and innocent Polly—did not, we apprehend, disappoint the hopes of her friends. Her appearance was interesting, and had that expression of natural timidity which is one charm of the character. Her acting was not much; but what there was of it, did not injure the effect of her singing, either by affectation or impropriety. In several of her songs she was enthusiastically and deservedly *encored*: particularly in that short delicious air of 'He so teased me,' she gave one clear note of fluttering ecstasy, which seemed as if her heart and voice together had suddenly burst prison, and mounted on the wings of joy, 'as light as bird from brake.' In the song, 'My all's in my possession,' she also gave a considerable expression of eager and tumultuous delight. 'Cease your funning' was by no means her most successful effort: her execution was too laboured and full of perplexing digressions; nor did her

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

voice appear (as it should do) to repose on the sentiment and merely to float upon the simple music of the air, like the halcyon borne upon the undulating wave. Miss Kelly's Lucy is admirable, but it was (last night) an aggravation of her usual manner of doing it. She was a virago in body more than in mind; and Macheath was apparently in more apprehension of her fists than of her spirit. • Munden played Peachum with good emphasis and discretion, and put only one or two jokes upon the character. He should not have put any; for Peachum is a grave personage, solemn, didactic, and man of business, rather than of pleasantiy. Downton's Lockit was good, but not his best. The battle-scene, about their mutual honesty, occasioned, with the disorder of cravats and tumbling of wigs, a good deal of boisterous mirth. Knight's Filch was drunken and smoky; but it was not the true Filch. Little Simmons is the only man who can play this precious character. all the rest are counterfeits.

MISS BRUNTON'S BEATRICE

COVENT GARDEN, *Nov.* 29, 1817

MISS BRUNTON appeared last night as Beatrice, in *Much Ado about Nothing*. This, to say the least of it, was a very bold undertaking. This lady has hitherto confined her efforts to a certain range of character, which, though the principal ones in the pieces to which they belong, constitute a subordinate walk of the drama. Here she was received with some applause, and was gradually acquiring popularity; but the distance between all this and Beatrice was infinite, it was a leap not to be taken in the dark, an attempt not to be made without full consideration, without carefully weighing the nature of the public expectation, the means we possess of comparison, our early prepossessions, and the difficulty of conveying even a tolerable idea of this character. Beatrice is in truth a noble creature; all that she says and does is referable to an innate sense of power, a superiority to those about her, a dignity of manner that is never compromised, and an insight into character which tells her, in her most sarcastic moods, how far she may go with safety. The different situations in which she is placed finely develop the formation of her mind: she is no hypocrite, her temper is open, warm, and unsuspecting:

MISS BRUNTON'S BEATRICE

when she believes that she is really loved, she does not trifle with the passion she has raised, and in her grief and indignation at the fate of her unfortunate friend, forgets her power, her love, and all the world besides. Miss Brunton is not equal either in conception or execution to the delineation of such a being. In the first scene, she addresses the messenger with the familiarity of an equal; her confession of love wanted that ease and frankness which is the essence of the character; and in the scene where her friend is falsely accused, was far too slow in discovering that emotion and indignation which so naturally result from the situation. She is perpetually introducing a sort of giggle, one can hardly call it a laugh, without any authority from the text or from the substance of the text, which is quite out of keeping, and in the conclusion of the scene, where she has persuaded Benedick to revenge the fate of Hero, when grief should have full possession of her mind, she flippantly, and in a transport of joy, with the like disregard of authority, calls him back to kiss her hand again. We regret the necessity of making these observations, but we shall always on such occasions deliver our sentiments freely, and above all shall take care that such high ground is not occupied, without strictly scrutinizing the pretensions of those who place themselves there. We are very far, too, from meaning to convey an unfavourable impression of Miss Brunton's general powers; it is possible for great merit to fail in Beatrice. Charles Kemble was successful in Benedick. we do not think the present state of the dramatic art could furnish a better representative

MISS BRUNTON'S BEATRICE

of that character. Emery's performance of Dogberry does him great credit; it was not at all caricatured, as we have too often seen it, but was quite within the truth: we have seldom witnessed the *vis comica* in a more genuine state. Miss Foote gave much interest to the part of Hero; her appeal to her father in the scene where she is falsely accused was forcible and affecting. With all the faults which attend the getting up of this play, we must not forget that it is Shakspeare's, and that an evening passed in hearing one of his plays, especially when given, as at present, nearly in its genuine state, must yield a considerable degree of pleasure.

THE HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN²

July 9, 1820

HOMER, it is said, that blind, wandering bard, visited many countries and saw the manners of many men :—

‘Et multorum vidit hominum mores’—

we, without stirring beyond the bills of mortality, can pay our court nightly to almost all the varieties of art and nature, by passing from theatre to theatre; from the Italian to the English Opera House (what a distance!), from Covent Garden to Drury Lane, which are pretty close on one another, from the Cobourg to the Surrey and to Sadler’s Wells, and next week to our neat little, snug, old-fashioned, airy, stifling summer-house, the Haymarket Theatre. We live in a land of play-houses, and play-houses are the world in little, which we bestride like a Colossus, and walk about in like Gulliver at Lilliput. We there, in the space of one short week, see all sorts of places and people that have been, or that never were—Greeks and Romans, Turks and Tartars; Indian caves and Eastern palaces, the Alps and icebergs, the Highlands of Scotland and the Vale of Tempe, Venetian gondolas and Margate hoys, Mrs. Mingle at the Beehive, and Virginius’s daughter slain by her father

THE HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN

in old Rome ; we have Mr. Macready one night as the bold outlaw Rob Roy, and the next as Henri Quatre, the brave, the humane, the chosen monarch of his people ; we have Mr. Kean (we hope not for the last, the very last time—Atlantic seas and another summer's gales will waft him back to us !) now as 'the black Othello,' and then as 'the Jew that Shakspeare drew' : we have all these and numbers besides, ghosts, witches, fairies, the man in the moon, Gods and Dæmons ; and in *Giovanni in London*, even 'Hell itself hides nothing from our view.'

'Creation sees us spurn his bounded reign,
And panting Time toils after us in vain.'

One of the pleasantest visits we have lately paid has been to the Tolbooth of Edinburgh; to the *Heart of Midlothian*, at the Surrey. We have seen a cat averse to cross a gutter ; we have known dandy critics who do not like to cross the water. They cry 'Faugh !' at the mention of the Cobourg or the Circus. Nevertheless, we entreat them to go : and they must be fastidious critics indeed who do not come away with a wish to see Miss Taylor again as Jeanie Deans. If they would 'wet an eye unused to flow,' let them go and weep at this perfect representation of one of the most perfect characters ever drawn. Jeanie Deans, the humble, simple, kind-hearted, disinterested, but inflexible and rigidly conscientious Jeanie Deans, is one of Walter Scott's *very best* (he has put more of the mountain heart of Scotland, and less of its barbarous costume and sawney gibberish into the character than into almost any other)—and she suffers nothing, no, not a jot,

in the hands of this genuine disciple of truth and nature. We had heard much in praise of Miss Taylor's acting in this part, but we did not believe it all till we saw her. Her beautiful and quaint simplicity, her awkwardness and self-possession, her straitforwardness of character which is shewn even in the right lines and angles in which she walks, her humility as to personal pretensions, and her courage, her enthusiasm, her devotedness to her cause, her firm reliance on the one idea (the saving of her sister's life) which has taken possession of her, and from which nothing can divert, or deter her, deserve that sort of applause which they meet with, mute admiration and silent tears. We never saw a part done more unaffectedly or more completely. It is as good as anything of Mr. Kean's or Miss Kelly's. Her introduction to the great Duke of Argyle, her drop-curtesies, her hurry and hesitation, her confusion when she gives him the wrong paper, vexed at the mistake, yet thinking it a trifling mistake that can be rectified, and that affects only herself, her lowliness and insignificance before the Queen, till she rises in the fervour of affection, and sees titles and dignities give way before the unshrinking, half-choked eloquence with which she pleads her sister's cause (pouring out a broken swelling heart along with the words she utters), were some of the most natural and striking parts of her performance. We never thoroughly liked the Scotch dialect before, but from this time forward we are friends with it, with its *guids* and its *a's*, and its drawl, and its nasal twang, and its abrupt turns, and all its pitiful vices on its back. Just as we had made

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this resolution, Dumbiedikes with his miserable whining ‘Ah! weel away, Jeany woman,’ with the leer of his eye and the troll of his tongue, half-knave and half-fool, had nearly thrown us back upon our discarded national prejudices. Miss Copeland’s Madge Wildfire is sweet and pathetic. It has a wild softness about it, which however is not precisely the original character. She is too pretty and too short for Madge, who has a genius like the spirit of the storm and lightning. Her playing of the part is to the idea in the novel like a miniature picture copied from Salvator Rosa. Her ivory skin has no freckles on it. Her eye glistens with tenderness, but does not blast with frenzy. She is like the little, helpless flower, shrinking from the pitiless sky, or ‘the pale primrose that forsaken dies;’ not like the tall mountain-plant, contending with the wind, the sun, and rain, weather-beaten, parched, and tortured into a thousand grotesque shapes. Mr Bengough made a respectable representative of the Duke; Mrs. Horn was an interesting Effie Deans; Mrs. Dibdin looked so like a Queen, so condescending and so gracious, so smiling and so insipid, so *would-be-something*, and so really nothing but—a Queen; and Mrs. Glasse, the Duke’s snuff-woman, spoke, looked, sung, and danced broad Scotch. With respect to the other actors—*But further this deponent sayeth not.*

INTRODUCTIONS TO THE
DRAMA

A NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS

THIS is certainly a very admirable play, and highly characteristic of the genius of its author, which was hard and forcible, and calculated rather to produce a strong impression than a pleasing one. There is considerable unity of design and a progressive interest in the fable, though the artifice by which the catastrophe is brought about (the double assumption of the character of favoured lovers by Wellborn and Lovell) is somewhat improbable and out of date; and the moral is peculiarly striking, because its whole weight falls upon one who all along prides himself in setting every principle of justice and all fear of consequences at defiance.

The character of Sir Giles Overreach (the most prominent feature of the play, whether in the perusal, or as it is acted) interests us less by exciting our sympathy than our indignation. We hate him very heartily, and yet not enough; for he has strong, robust points about him that repel the impertinence of censure, and he sometimes succeeds in making us stagger in our opinion of his conduct, by throwing off any idle doubts or scruples that might hang upon it in his own mind, 'like dew-drops from the lion's mane.' His steadiness of purpose scarcely stands in need of support from the common sanctions of morality, which he intrepidly breaks through, and

he almost conquers our prejudices by the consistent and determined manner in which he braves them. Self-interest is his idol, and he makes no secret of his idolatry :—he is only a more devoted and unblushing worshipper at this shrine than other men. Self-will is the only rule of his conduct, to which he makes every other feeling bend : or rather, from the nature of his constitution, he has no sickly, sentimental obstacles to interrupt him in his headstrong career. He is a character of obdurate self-will, without fanciful notions or natural affections ; one who has no regard to the feelings of others, and who professes an equal disregard to their opinions. He minds nothing but his own ends, and takes the shortest and surest way to them. His understanding is clear-sighted, and his passions strong-nerved. Sir Giles is no flincher, and no hypocrite : and he gains almost as much by the hardihood with which he avows his impudent and sordid designs as others do by their caution in concealing them. He is the demon of selfishness personified ; and carves out his way to the objects of his unprincipled avarice and ambition with an arm of steel, that strikes but does not feel the blow it inflicts. The character of calculating, systematic self-love, as the master-key to all his actions, is preserved with great truth of keeping and in the most trifling circumstances. Thus ruminating to himself, he says, ‘ I’ll walk, to get me an appetite : ’tis but a mile ; and exercise will keep me from being porsy ! ’—Yet to show the absurdity and impossibility of a man’s being governed by any such pretended exclusive regard to his own interest,

this very Sir Giles who laughs at conscience, and scorns opinion, who ridicules everything as fantastical but wealth, solid, substantial wealth, and boasts of himself as having been the founder of his own fortune by his contempt for every other consideration, is ready to sacrifice the whole of his enormous possessions—to what?—to a title, a sound, to make his daughter ‘right honourable,’ the wife of a lord whose name he cannot repeat without loathing, and in the end becomes the dupe and falls a victim to that very opinion of the world which he despises!

The character of Sir Giles Overreach has been found fault with as unnatural; and it may, perhaps, in the present refinement of our manners, have become in a great measure obsolete. But we doubt whether even still, in remote and insulated parts of the country, sufficient traces of the same character of wilful selfishness, mistaking the inveteracy of its purposes for their rectitude, and boldly appealing to power as justifying the abuses of power, may not be found to warrant this an undoubted original—probably a facsimile of some individual of the poet’s actual acquaintance. In less advanced periods of society than that in which we live, if we except rank, which can neither be an object of common pursuit nor immediate attainment, money is the only acknowledged passport to respect. It is not merely valuable as a security for want, but it is the only defiance against the insolence of power. Avarice is sharpened by pride and necessity. There are then few of the arts, the amusements, and accomplishments that soften and sweeten life, that raise or

refine it : the only way in which any one can be of service to himself or another is by his command over the gross commodities of life ; and a man is worth just so much as he has. When he who is not ' lord of acres ' is looked upon as a slave and a beggar, the soul becomes wedded to the soil by which its worth is measured, and takes root in it in proportion to its own strength and stubbornness of character.—The example of Wellborn may be cited in illustration of these remarks. The loss of his land makes all the difference between ' young Master Wellborn ' and ' rogue Wellborn ; ' and the treatment he meets with in this latter capacity is the best apology for the character of Sir Giles. Of the two it is better to be the oppressor than the oppressed.

Massinger, it is true, dealt generally in extreme characters, as well as in very repulsive ones. The passion is with him wound up to its height at first, and he never lets it down afterwards. It does not gradually arise out of previous circumstances, nor is it modified by other passions. This gives an appearance of abruptness, violence, and extravagance to all his plays. All Shakspeare's characters act from mixed motives, and are made what they are by various circumstances. All Massinger's characters act from single motives, and become what they are, and remain so, by a pure effort of the will, in spite of circumstances. This last author endeavoured to embody an abstract principle ; labours hard to bring out the same individual trait in its most exaggerated state ; and the force of his impassioned characters arises for the most part from the obstinacy with which they exclude every other

feeling. Their vices look of a gigantic stature from their standing alone. Their actions seem extravagant, from their having always the same fixed aim—the same incorrigible purpose. The fault of Sir Giles Overreach, in this respect, is less the excess to which he pushes a favourite propensity, than in the circumstance of its being unmixed with any other virtue or vice.

We may find the same simplicity of dramatic conception in the comic as in the tragic characters of this author. Justice Greedy has but one idea or subject in his head throughout. He is always eating, or talking of eating. His belly is always in his mouth, and we know nothing of him but his appetite; he is as sharp-set as travellers from off a journey. His land of promise touches on the borders of the wilderness: his thoughts are constantly in apprehension of feasting or famishing. A fat turkey floats before his imagination in royal state, and his hunger sees visions of chine of beef, venison pasties, and Norfolk dumplings, as if it were seized with a calenture. He is a very amusing personage; and in what relates to eating and drinking, as peremptory as Sir Giles himself. —Marrall is another instance of confined comic humour, whose ideas never wander beyond the ambition of being the implicit drudge of another's knavery or good fortune. He sticks to his stewardship, and resists the favour of a salute from a fine lady as not entered in his accounts. The humour of this character is less striking in the play than in Munden's personification of it. The other characters do not require any particular analysis. They are very insipid, good sort of people.

THE SOLDIER'S DAUGHTER

THE *Soldier's Daughter* is one of the most popular of our acting plays: and it attacks the public on so many of its weak sides, that it is no wonder that it is popular, in spite of the moderate share of talent displayed in it, or the slenderness of the interest excited. The author (Mr Cherry) was himself an actor of some merit; and, in preparing this Comedy for the stage, profited of the secrets which he had learned in the school of his profession, by never missing an opportunity of introducing those allusions which he had found infallible signals for drawing down the plaudits of an audience upon the characters that uttered them. Here are clap-traps in abundance and of the most obvious kind—appeals in every page to our patriotism, our humanity, our sensibility, to those professions of public or private affection, which not to applaud on the boards of a theatre would be as indecorous as not to drink a toast in company, or to contradict a lady in an argument. ‘We compare notes with the amiable characters in the play, and compliment ourselves on the wonderful similarity between us’ We are reminded of our own boasted perfections both as men and Britons:—or if any follies and weaknesses appear, they are sure to lean to the favourable side—*too much* good-nature, *too much*

THE SOLDIER'S DAUGHTER

gaiety and thoughtlessness, *too much* unsuspecting frankness, *too much* drollery and archness of humour. The Author makes it a rule to insinuate that his characters have all manner of good qualities, by apologizing for the excesses into which they are led by them; and thus kindly recommends them to our protection and countenance. Their benevolence is such that it opens their purses, and obtrudes their charities unlooked for and in spite of themselves,—they cannot help it, and he hopes we shall excuse this extreme tenderness of their nature, ‘open as day to melting charity.’—Then they ‘have a foolish rheum affects them’ at a tale of distress, and the handkerchief applied to hide their tears is a signal for ours to flow—then they have such an odd way with them, and say such odd things, that they cannot help laughing at themselves. We laugh too for company. The ‘Ha! ha! ha!’ at the end of almost every sentence (not of the lachrymose kind) is equivalent to a stage direction, ‘Here the audience are supposed to laugh, or the jest cannot go on.’

The title of the play, *The Soldier's Daughter*, is itself a military *coup-de-main*; it is a challenge to our national bravery, and natural pity. It is hardly fair thus to take an audience by storm or sap. The lady herself ‘professes too much;’ and identifies her own and her country's cause with a very heroic defiance of common sense. The Widow Cheerly is over-cheerful, over-frank, over-hospitable, but not over-nice; she might be admitted to the mess-room as a cadet, or take the field as a volunteer, by a mere change of dress. Her speech ‘would not

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betray her.' She is a volunteer in friendship, a volunteer in love, and a volunteer in mimicry and letter-writing; but she carries off the liberties she takes by the volubility of her tongue and the freedom of her gestures. She has no affected regrets for the loss of her first husband, nor any affected objections to taking another. This is the first man she meets, indeed; but then he is at the same time one of the most amiable and unaccountable of mortals. Frank Heartall is one of those stock characters of the sentimental comedy, who are represented as all heart and no head, as getting themselves and others into unmeaning scrapes for pure want of thought, and getting out of them by much the same sort of chance-medley; as murdering their best friends, or relieving utter strangers as it happens; and doing good or making mischief, without the least malice aforethought. This character is but slightly sketched in by the author, and would be hardly intelligible but for the well-known family likeness. Mr. Bannister first came out in the part: he had been used to the class, and could give a cue to the critics.

Old Heartall is a Governor returned from India, blunt and well-meaning, but strangely versatile in his opinions, and as strangely led by the nose by the undisguised hypocrisy of Ferret, a character that disgusts us almost equally by the villainy and the shallowness of his plots, and who attempts to palliate his iniquity at last by observing with much gravity and phlegm, 'That had there been no such vice as avarice, he had been an honest man.'

Mr and Mrs. Malfort contribute to the pathos of

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the piece, and their child Julia and her doll, 'Miss Good Gentleman,' are pretty episodes. Malfort's rashness in challenging Heartall and suspecting his wife's attachment in consequence of a ridiculous anonymous communication, might be particularly blamed, if in this comedy folly, as well as vice and virtue, wit, thu our, everything, were not gratuitous.

ROMÉO AND JULIET

GARRICK has altered *Romeo and Juliet*, not spoiled it; which indeed it would hardly seem in the power of man to do, if we had not known what has been so ingeniously effected in other instances of Shakspeare's plays. He has done chiefly what as a judicious manager he was perhaps bound to do—omitted some parts, and shortened others. He has in general committed no voluntary sacrilege, has 'played no fantastic tricks' before his author, to please the vitiated taste of the spectator. The play of *Romeo and Juliet* may be compared, for the sweetness and colours of the poetry, to a spreading rose-tree: Garrick has pruned and trimmed it, has curtailed it of some of its arching branches, and lopped off some of its fairest flowers, but the crimson dyes still sparkle on its bosom, and its fragrance scents the air. The purple light of love tinges all objects in this play, and makes even death look beautiful. We hear with delight the silver sound of lovers' tongues by night, or the voice of the nightingale from the pomegranate-tree. Nature seems to put forth all its freshness; and the heart throbs with its full weight of joy, too soon changed to woe. The golden cup of pleasure, mantling to the brim, is dashed with bitterness. the intoxicating draught of youth, of hope, of love, drowning and ravishing

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the sense, is suddenly turned to poison. Still the feeling of a certain tender voluptuousness is that which remains and triumphs to the last ; for the dart of affection, though deadly, is barbed by misfortune, not by unkindness, by hate or contempt. The sufferings of the hero and heroine arise from the enmity of parent, or the perverseness of their stars, not from their own misconduct or opposing wills ; the tide of mutual passion in their breasts is seen and flows on, making sweet music as it flows, to immortal raptures : fate alone is not consenting to their happiness : they ‘ are pleasant in their lives and lovely, and in their deaths they are not divided ’ From the highest point of brief and unlooked-for ecstasy they pass to bale and bitterness, as brief as unexpected ; and thence sink to last g peace In their persons we see the rose of love bloom and wither in a few short hours, and all the gaudy colouring of life turned to a marble monument, cold, motionless, and placid The strokes of passion in this tragedy are only equalled by the powers of expression and the beauties of language : and the variety of character and extent of subject are what were common to Shakspeare’s genius, and at the same time peculiar to it. The characters of the lovers are the ideal perfection of feminine sweetness and undissembled frankness, of ardent affection and gallant daring. Rosaline, Romeo’s first love, is left out in the acting-play, to narrow the canvass, and assist the concentration of the interest. In the original, his love of Juliet is a desertion from a former mistress, while Juliet’s fondness is an undivided and virgin passion She triumphs (as it were) equally

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over her lover's constancy and *in* her own. The other characters that assist in the story or adorn it, Mercutio, Paris, the fiery Tybalt, the Nurse, the Friar, Old Capulet and Montague, all fill their parts with truth, spirit, and nature, and are moving and speaking pictures in the scene. No one but our poet could amalgamate such various and apparently contradictory materials, so as to produce such an intense and unbroken interest. The opportunities for displaying the powers of the actor or actress, in the two principal characters of Romeo and Juliet, may be judged of rather from their being so often chosen for this purpose than from what is done in them. The concluding scene of all (or the double revival of hope when the lovers meet at the tomb, and the double agony of despair that follows) is of Garrick's adding, and he may be justified on the score of theatrical effect; but the distress of mind produced by it would accord better with the productions of the modern German school than with the genius of 'the gentle' Shakspeare.—Of all Shakspeare's plays, this is perhaps the one that is acted, if not the, oftenest, with most pleasure to the spectator.

THE BELLE'S STRATAGEM

MRS. COWLEY, the authoress of the following play, is said to have written it in consequence of her being present one night at the representation of a popular play, and saying to her husband that she thought she could write a better comedy herself. This she has done in *The Belle's Stratagem*. Many people, no doubt, have said the same thing, but few have kept their word. *The Belle's Stratagem* is often acted, and never to empty benches, and it is a particular favourite with female *débutantes*. The part of Letitia Hardy is indeed one that is expressly calculated to display the various talents and accomplishments of a young actress, it passes from the highest brilliancy of fashionable manners to the most awkward and mawkish rusticity,—she dances, she sings, she romps, is grave and gay, is 'everything by turns, and nothing long;' studiously calls forth her powers both of attraction and repulsion; and by the multiplicity of changes and aspects she assumes to effect her whimsical and hazardous purpose, dazzles the audience without putting her pretensions in any one of the characters she has to sustain to the test of a severe and continued scrutiny. The texture of the character nearly resembles that of a changeable silk; and if an actress has any powers or pleasing qualities at all,

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it is hard but some one of them will catch the light and strike the public eye under the shifting shapes and rapid evolutions which it has to undergo. Several young actresses have therefore made an impression on their first appearance in this part, which they did not afterwards support when they came to undertake characters of a less varied and fantastic description. The part, also, besides the aid of continual and sudden transitions, is *phantomimic* in some of its most striking situations ; and it would be cruel not to be pleased with a lady dancing a minuet in a mask, though we are not bound implicitly to admire her face or conversation at other times. The first idea of this assumption of various characters, and of a condescension to the lowest, in order to surprise a lover into an expression of admiration, seems borrowed from the behaviour of Miss Hardcastle, the heroine of *She Stoops to Conquer*. There is, however, more spirit in the execution, as there is more probability in the conception, of Mrs. Cowley's story ; for it is more natural that a lady should resort to extraordinary expedients to overcome the indifference or aversion than the *bashfulness* of her intended husband — The other characters in the play assist very agreeably in carrying on the plot ; and have considerable interest, variety, and liveliness in themselves. Old Hardy, the father of Letitia, who personates a dying man ; Doricourt, who goes mad to avoid a wife, Courtall, the gay gallant, who mistakes a kept woman for a lady of quality ; Sir George Touchwood, and Lady Frances, who, with a great deal of pretty innocence of the dangers of

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fashionable life, has a great inclination to its pleasures, all these, with Miss Ogle, Flutter, Saville, and Lady Rackett, fill up the phantasmagoria of the scene—'come like shadows, so depart'—and make a little world of Comedy in themselves. There is hardly, in fact, a dramatic commonplace, of which the fair authoress has not availed herself with considerable ingenuity and address: and we need have no hesitation in attributing to the comedy of *The Belle's Stratagem* the praise of wit, invention, a knowledge of life, and of the stage, spirited dialogue, and a story replete with incident and interest.

THE RECRUITING OFFICER

FARQUHAR, in his good-humoured dedication of this play 'To all friends round the Wrekin,' informs us that it took its rise from some little turns of humour which he met with almost within the shade of that famous hill, and it bears internal marks of this local and personal origin. It is natural, easy, lively, flowing; written without any effort, and producing no very great effect—at least in the mere perusal. The characters, incidents, dialogue, and grouping are such as he might very well be supposed to have taken from real life, and to have transferred to the comic stage, with more felicity and fidelity than expense of thought. Costar Pearmain and Thomas Appletree, Sergeant Kite and Captain Brazen, might be found without much trouble in the market-place; Justice Balance and his associates in the town-hall, or at the Raven, in the good town of Shrewsbury (which, we fancy, was pretty much the same then that it is now); and two such accomplished and persevering lovers as Plume and Worthy could hardly fail to meet with a Sylvia or a Melinda in any two young ladies who had 'felt their fingers ache at the boarding-school with the sharp air from the Welch mountains.'—Farquhar was himself brought up in a camp; lived all his life at free-quarters; and was at home in the

subject of *The Recruiting Officer*. There is in truth in all his works the same display of gaiety and gallantry; of thoughtless adventure, of 'hair-breadth 'scapes', and of the slippery turns of fortune; of love at first sight, and vows made with ease, and heroically kept or carelessly broken; of hands and hearts plighted without consent of parents or leave asked of prudence. His Muse, in a word, might be said to be a bird of passage, and his Cupid to be the drummer-boy to a marching regiment. He seems as if he had written his comedies in his tent, and before he had time to copy them out or revise them with care, (if indeed he could have done anything with care), to have been ordered on distant service and summoned to new adventures. 'You shall relish him no less in the soldier than the scholar' *The Recruiting Officer* is not equal, in the exhibition of wit, invention, or character, to *The Beaux' Stratagem*, nor in the romantic interest of the story to *The Inconstant*, nor in the power of single scenes to the two parts of *The Trip to the Jubilee*; but there are sufficient indications of all these excellences interspersed throughout it, the streaks and glittering veins of the precious ore everywhere striking the eye, if not the solid ingots and massy wedges of pure gold. The scenes are (too much) lively sketches, tacked together without labour or artifice, the characters speak with more volubility than premeditation. The incidents frequently give pleasure rather from exciting surprise than from their conformity to probability or decorum, as is the case with the elopement of Sylvia in the dress of a young volunteer; and some

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of the characters are left unexplained, particularly that of Melinda, whom we are at a loss whether to regard as a prude or a lady of no very difficult virtue. The lower characters in the play are those which tell best in the representation, and as we have seen them acted, they form a sort of rallying point to the attention, and give life and spirit to that which becomes evanescent by its desultoriness, and indifferent from a want of progressively increasing interest. Nature in her simpler forms and expressions remains nearly the same, and has the same inexpressible charm because we recognize the truth of the resemblance between the immediate copy and the lasting prototype. Rose, Sergeant Kite, and the two raw recruits, still *tell* on the boards of the theatre from the appropriate accompaniments of costume, dialect and manner; while the address of the gay Captain Plume, the coquettish airs of Sylvia, and the graceful, reserved, significant *hauteur* of Melinda are at present lost to the stage, and unfortunately leave those characters stripped of their proper share of prominence and effect.

A BOLD STROKE FOR A WIFE

A *BOLD Stroke for a Wife* is another of Mrs Centhyre's comedies; and an admirable one it is. The scope it gives for the various display of an actor's talents in the principal character, Colonel Feignwell, is unequalled. The affected fine gentleman, the impudent quack, the Dutch merchant, and the gifted brother, who are supposed to pay their court to the four guardians of the same young lady, have all an opportunity of showing themselves in their true and striking colours, and while we laugh at their different jargon, dress, foppery, and quaintness, we are proportionably delighted with the ingenuity of the performer who wears so many disguises, and in all of them pleases. The conscious pleasure we derive from the ability of a good actor is in general, as it were, defeated by the very excellence of his performance, which leads us to identify the individual with the character he represents so nearly to the life. It is only when he in some sort reconciles contradictions, and personates opposite characters before our eyes, that we are forcibly undeceived, and enjoy at the same time the truth of the imitation of nature, together with the triumph of the actor's art. We remember to have had this sensation in a very proud and pre-eminent degree in witnessing Mr Bannister's

representation of the versatile hero of this comic romance. While the extreme contrasts of outward manners and appearance strike the mind as more ludicrous from being thus incongruously combined in the same person, and assumed in sport, they perhaps suggest another lesson tacitly to the spectator, that it is the dress which makes the chief distinction not only on the stage but in real life, and that at bottom there is little other distinction than a broad brim or regimental cocked hat between the actual Colonel Feignwell and the true Simon Pure. Anne Lovely, the ward of so many guardians, the object and the prize of so many shifting contrivances, starts at the sight of the supposed sanctified grimacer, but as soon as she finds her mistake, runs into the embraces of her military gallant. But it has been long observed that *the hood does not make the monk*; and the fair lady might have been equally mistaken in her man, though he should have worn a plain drab instead of a gay scarlet coat all his life, and not merely one for a frolic. The invention exhibited in the plot of *A Bold Stroke for a Wife* cannot be too much praised: the execution of the details is nearly equal to it. Of the several parts which Feignwell has to assume in the prosecution of his design, that of the beau is the least prominent, and that of the burgomaster the most mechanical. The Egyptian traveller and the Quaker brother are the most copious and amusing. Simon Pure is indeed so very plausible in his pretensions, and moved so irresistibly by the flesh and the spirit, that he has become a kind of proverbial nickname for a canting

A BOLD STROKE FOR A WIFE

hypocritical Friend. The four guardians are well described, and happily made to contribute their parts to the success of the main enterprise. Though the design upon all four is the same, it does not run into monotony, but is varied with different episodes and accompaniments, and meets with different obstacles, in each instance. Sackbut, the landlord, is also a very entertaining character, and makes a good second in a mischievous plot. On the whole, though there are many comedies more rich in wit and sentiment, there are very few more full of life and spirit than the following.

THE ROAD TO RUIN

MR. HOLCROFT'S play of *The Road to Ruin*, whatever other objections may be made to it, has this great excellence, that the author seems to have done in it just what he intended. The design may not be lofty or elegant, but the execution is in general complete. Sophia, the innocent heroine of the piece, is the only exception to this remark; she is meant to be interesting, and is only girlish and insipid. The Widow Warren, her relation and rival, is meant to be disgusting; and in that the author certainly has not failed. Mr. Holcroft has more than once satirized the prominent vices of city manners, and made them to consist in a sordid union of gross ignorance, impudence, selfishness, and upstart purse-proud self-importance. In the present play, however, he has contrasted those glaring and odious qualities with the more respectable features and domestic virtues of a city-life in the person and family of the elder Dornton. This character is an admirable representative of that class of English merchants who to plain manners and an unassuming outside, unite unsophisticated, upright sentiments; who have enlarged their minds with their fortunes; who have made frugality and industry factors for benevolence, and the path of honour the road to wealth; who do not

let their generosity get the better of their justice—nor their justice of their generosity; in whom the maxims of the world have not obliterated the dictates of humanity; who have heaped up piles of silver and gold, but not to bury the natural affections under them; whose names stand at the head of their *firm*, and are written in the hearts of the distressed; who are members of the Stock-Exchange, without having ceased to belong to the larger community of mankind. If such examples form the exception to the general rule, (as excellence is in all kinds rare), they deserve the more to be held up to admiration and imitation, and in this respect, old Dornton may be considered as stamping this very lively and entertaining comedy with an additional moral value. Nothing can well surpass, in the expression of natural genuine feeling, or in happy dramatic effect, some of the scenes between him and his son, the thoughtless, extravagant, but warm-hearted and noble-minded Henry Dornton. We might point out in particular the very admirable and touching scene between Dornton and his son, in which he returns to bid him ‘good-night;’ and that in which the son hears his name struck off from the *firm*, with the most frank good-humoured admission of his own failings, and the same sincere, involuntary declarations of respect and affection to his father. The invention (among the *dramatis personae*) of the names of Mr. Sulky and Mr. Silky, is not one of the least merits of this comedy, whose characters are as decidedly opposed as their names are nicely distinguished. The character, moreover, which has given an almost unprecedented popularity

THE ROAD TO RUIN

to this play, is that of Goldfinch. This personage is a lucky compound of dulness and vivacity. His whole stock of ideas consists of half a dozen cant terms, as 'That's your sort,' 'Go it, my lad,' &c. ; and yet it cannot be denied that he gives its soul and spirit to the piece. His volubility of speech and action is the pivot on which everything else turns round with dazzling rapidity. He is a sublimation of animal life and action, without a particle of understanding or any principle of virtue. We do not hate, nay, we hardly despise him ; though it would be difficult to say, judging by the ordinary standard, whether he is most knave or fool. He talks nothing but nonsense, always the same nonsense and that incessantly ; and still we are not tired of him, for he seems never tired of himself or of his own eccentric folly and gross vulgarity. 'Pleas'd with himself, who all the world can please' In the hands of the late Mr. Lewis (his original representative) he made the most irresistible caricature possible : and his exclamation, 'Damn all dancing-masters and their umbrellas,' had a most electrical effect upon the house. In a word, honest Goldfinch was the forerunner of a race of dramatic heroes, who have turned comedy into a school of dashing impertinence ; and *The Road to Ruin*, with all its excellences, led the way to that style of fashionable dialogue which combines the extreme points of metaphysical sentiments and slang phrases with a success truly enviable, if not altogether unaccountable.

THE BEAUX' STRATAGEM

THE *Beaux' Stratagem* is the best of Farquhar's comedies, and undoubtedly one of the best comedies in the English language. The author wrote it in the last stage of a lingering and fatal disease, and he only just lived to see it acted. It is a delightful, though a melancholy thought, to see the spirit of lively enjoyment and brilliant fancy thus kept alive to the last, and the spark of true genius only extinguished with that of life. Of such men as Farquhar, who live and die the benefactors of their species, by making others partakers of their intellectual existence, it may be well said—

‘Even from the tomb the voice of nature cries,
Even in their ashes live their wonted fires.’

The original Epilogue of the play alludes to the affecting situation of the author at the moment when it first appeared, and claims that indulgence on the score of compassion, to which it was so well entitled on the score of merit—Few plays have been acted oftener, since that time; and there are few that have given more unmingled satisfaction to the audience, or called forth the talents of the best actors more successfully. Archer was one of Garrick's favourite parts, which he played, it is said,

THE BEAUX' STRATAGEM

with infinite life, spirit, and address ; and the only fault that was found with it was that he played the assumed character too well, and brushed his master's coat or received his orders too much like a real, instead of a pretended footman. This was certainly an objection, for one great charm (indeed, the greatest) of the piece is the ease and gaiety with which the double situation both of this character and that of Aimwell is played off ; the graceful transition from the assumed to the natural character, each turning carelessly and imperceptibly into the other, the thin varnish of low breeding and knavish intrigue, never totally hiding the original ground of the fine gentleman and the man of honour : and the opposition of the sentiments and situations, the manners and the pretensions of the two principal actors in the scene, keeping up a precarious balance of power, and a very nice equivocal between them. Indeed, all the characters from the highest to the lowest, through their numerous and complicated gradations, Aimwell and Archer, Mrs. Sullen and her spouse, Dorinda and Lady Bountiful, Boniface, Gibbet, and Cherry, down to Foigard, Gipse, and honest Scrub, all play into one another's hands, and contribute their share to the advancement and solution of the plot, with a felicity of art and nature which costs the author no trouble, and gives the highest pleasure and surprise to the reader. *The Beaux' Stratagem* is, in short, a comedy as full as it can hold of bustle, character, and incident ; of high and low life ; of strokes of fortune and traits of humour. The adventures are perfectly natural, but succeed

THE BEAUX' STRATAGEM

one another so rapidly, that as many surprising and ludicrous events are crowded together in a few hours as might happen in the same number of years. The manners and state of society described are just obsolete enough to become the more striking and interesting by contrast. The dialogue has equal freedom and vivacity : and the smartness and quick succession of the repartees in some parts of it cannot be surpassed. Of this kind in particular are Boniface's answers in praise of his ale, and the two short but precious scenes between Archer and Cherry, when they first meet alone, and afterwards when she repeats the lover's catechism. Sullen is a character done to the life, and shows the dreary and desolate state of country manners, the formidable dearth of rustic resources a hundred years since. Whether the idea of manners in general conveyed here is an enviable one or not, nothing can be better calculated for the purposes of the Comic Muse ; and it will be long before we find (upon the stage, at least) anything more amusing than the unpremeditated gallantry and easy impudence of Archer, the reluctant scruples of Mrs Sullen, the good-natured susceptibility of Cherry, and the well-meaning, unconscious stupidity of Scrub.

AS YOU LIKE IT

PERHAPS nothing shews in a more convincing point of view the power and felicity of Shakspeare's pen than the varied range of characters which in almost every one of his plays gives the utmost scope to the talents of an actor, and in which an actor is sure to fix his fame by approaching even to a tolerable resemblance of the original conception. There are no characters which are so easily spoiled on the stage as this author's, none which require to be done to such a degree of nicety, or in which the audience are so jealous of the truth of representation, because there are none which are so completely made out to 'the mind's eye,' and in which consequently the smallest aberration from the distinct image we have formed to ourselves is so immediately detected and reprobated. We judge of his characters (so true are they to nature, so intimately has he made us acquainted with every peculiarity relating to them) as we do of the likeness of a particular friend, which must have not only the general outline but the minute details and the exact expression to come up to our expectations. Whoever plays Shakspeare, does it at his peril: and either forfeits or crowns his reputation by the attempt, for his ideal portraits are a sort of *written nature*, and the filling of them up by appropriate looks, tones, and gestures is the true

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test and touchstone of theatrical genius.—We are not fond, for this reason, of going to see a new actor come out in any favourite part of this author, as the failure is particularly painful and discordant to our feelings, but it is at the same time as gratifying as it is rare, to see any such part performed to the height of our wishes; and to see a whole play so got up is beyond even our hopes. What a treat, for instance, must it be to see *As You Like It* represented before our eyes as it exists in our fancy! What a rich and varied display of costume and scenery, of characters, manners, and sentiments, of nature and passion, and of wisdom and folly! Who could pretend to act Jaques too well, or to speak the speech on the stages of human life with more genius than it is written; or to give additional interest to his melancholy or bitterness to his sarcasm, or to combine an air of dignity and negligence to a greater degree than we suppose them united in his person? What actor could do more than echo the words of Touchstone, than assume the quaintness of his garb and of his sentiments, be as witty, as malicious, and provoking with his eye as the poet has made him with his tongue, and make the accompaniment of smiles, of shrugs, and antic grimaces he must put on as significant and amusing as the text which they are meant to illustrate; or again, what could give us a finer idea of grace, of manliness, of generosity and youthful affection than Orlando perfectly well acted, or of voluble archness, of feigned indifference, and tender sensibility than his Rosalind; Audrey, too, should not play the fool in vain (if Miss Pope were alive

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again to represent her), and the shepherd, who had never wandered from the forest, should preach his humble philosophy with the efficacy of a hermit. To see even these few-characters acted as they might be would indeed enrich 'the very² faculties of eyes and ears,' but to see *As You Like It* as it is too often played, is altogether as mortifying, since 'the best things by abuse become the worst.' The seeing it acted for the first time after knowing it almost by heart, merely from the reading it, is like waking from a golden dream; and like Caliban, disturbed from the imagination of sweet sounds, 'we cry to dream again.'

JANE SHORE

IT is a rare felicity in any author to produce two tragedies which shall last their century. Rowe, the author of *The Fair Penitent* and of *Jane Shore*, has attained this posthumous honour. It is curious to reflect in this respect on the disproportion between human wishes and their accomplishment. The aspiration of the mind is after the highest excellence, its longings are after immortality; its performance is generally as nothing; its triumph but for a moment!—How many matchless works have perished in embryo, even with the thought that gave them birth?—how many have fallen stillborn from the press?—how many have been damned on their first appearance, ‘a sacrifice to grinning scorn and infamy!’—how many have lingered on a few nights, and then dropped into deathless oblivion, mocking their authors’ feverish hopes?—how many have been popular for a time, and then given place to others?—how few have remained, what all were designed to be?—heirs of universal praise, and the lasting ornament and delight of the public mind!—There are, it should seem, but two ways in which an author can hope to acquire this permanent reputation and influence over the thoughts and feelings of others; either by the force and originality of his own conceptions, or by the warmth and vigour with which he enters into and is able to express popular and obvious sentiments. The last of these appears to

have been the *forte* of Rowe, in his tragic compositions; and is that which has given them so considerable and fixed a hold over the minds of his countrymen. In writing for the stage, he does not seem to consult his own breast, or to consider what the parties themselves would have felt; but to give language to the thoughts that would be suggested on such an occasion to the spectators. His great object is stage effect, and common sympathy; and this he secures,—first, by the selection of a well-known or perfectly intelligible story,—by striking situations and obvious sources of calamity; and, secondly, by ingrafting on the tragic spectacle frequent and vehement exclamations of grief, of wonder, of horror, &c., and general reflections of morality, such as are the offspring rather of speculative indifference than of real passion. If to unlock and control the deeper and more powerful springs of thought and feeling is the highest proof of genius, yet to obtain the almost unlimited command over the more vulgar and superficial sympathy which is excited by well-placed show and verbal declamation, is no mean nor easy task; as may be seen, from the few who succeed in doing it with continued success. *Jane Shore* is a tragedy, the reputation of which is embalmed in the tears it has drawn from numberless eyes. The aggravated distress of the heroine, her reverse of fortune, her unmerited ill-treatment by those she trusts, the attachment of her husband to her, (the motives of which we could only respect in her peculiar circumstances), her boasted beauty of form, and her apparent patience and resignation of temper, certainly make an appeal

to the affections which is not easily resisted. Alicia is not a very pleasant, though a very probable character; and would hardly be endured in the virulence of her actions, and the extravagance of her speeches, but that she meets with a triumphant foil in her more amiable but not more fortunate friend. The mercenary generosity of Hastings, which is turned into sudden hatred on his meeting with an unexpected repulse to his amorous overtures, is well understood, and distinctly portrayed. Gloucester is a character of considerable stateliness of deportment, and energy of purpose, and would have a better effect, did we not compare it indirectly with the same character in Shakspeare. The incident of his coming into the council chamber with his bared arm, and accusing Hastings of withering it up by sorcery, is literally taken from Shakspeare, but luckily for Rowe, Cibber has left out this striking scene in his alteration of *Richard the Third*. The language of Rowe is often modelled on that of his great predecessor, and is sometimes even borrowed from Scripture—so willing was our author to avail himself of any resources within his reach. His verse is smooth and equal, if not flowing or mellifluous; and is raised above prose, if it is not elevated into the highest strain of poetry. Perhaps the chief character in this play has never been so well represented as it was by Mrs. Siddons; and indeed, it requires the highest dignity of the human form and expression to reconcile us completely to the exhibition of the last calamity of human nature,—the failure of life from the want of its common sustenance.

LATER JOURNALISM

A MODERN TORY DELINEATED

ATORY is a blind idolater of old times and long established customs, reveres the wisdom of former ages, and reprobates innovations and improvements; inculcates passive obedience and the divine right of kings in some countries, in others acknowledges the right of the people to dethrone an incompetent or tyrannical monarch and chuse another. A Tory never objects to increasing the power of the Crown, or abridging the liberties of the people, or even calls in question the justice or wisdom of any of the measures of government. Ministers may act with impunity, and break their most solemn promises, and set public opinion at defiance. A Tory may with perfect consistency accept of a situation in administration to act with those whom he had formerly accused of ignorance, incapacity, gross neglect, and disregard of the public interest. A Tory exerts his eloquence to liberate negro slaves, yet constantly supports measures which tend to enslave his own countrymen; is averse from Parliamentary Reform, or retrenchment in the public expenditure; considers a large standing army as necessary in time of peace to support the dignity of the Crown, and preserve social order; approves of British troops being employed in the honourable service of bestowing the inexpressible

blessings of a legitimate government on an ungrateful people ; admires the ' great moral lesson ' given to the French nation, in the faithful observance of the Treaty of Paris. A Tory considers sinecure places and pensions as sacred and inviolable, to reduce, or abolish which, would be unjust and dangerous ; is of opinion that war is productive of more good than evil, and never enquires into the justice or necessity of commencing hostilities , and accuses those who differ with him on political subjects of being Jacobins, Revolutionists, and enemies to their country. A Tory highly values a long pedigree and ancient families, and despises low-born persons (the newly created nobility excepted) ; adores coronets, stars, garters, ribbons, crosses, and titles of all sorts, bestowed on all sorts of persons (the estimable and philanthropic discoverer of the means of exterminating a fatal and contagious disease alone excepted !) A Tory hates all dissenters from the Established Church, as fools or knaves and disaffected to government ; venerates the beneficed clergy, for their zealous attention to their spiritual duties, their disinterestedness, and liberality, particularly to their curates ; is averse to Catholic emancipation, or bettering the condition of the poor Irish, who would be contented and happy, existing in the lowest state of poverty and human degradation, if not instigated by Jacobins and Reformers ; and deems martial law the best remedy for discontent. A Tory considers corporal punishment as necessary, mild, and salutary, notwithstanding soldiers and sailors frequently commit suicide to escape from it ; asserts that the criminal

laws are wise, humane, and just, and would never show mercy to any offender ; sees nothing wrong in the conduct of the Police in the metropolis , considers thief-takers as most disinterested and deserving servants of the public ; disapproves of the Insolvent Debtor's Bill, which prevents a vindictive creditor from imprisoning an unfortunate debtor for life ; sees no hardship in a person's being confined for thirty years in the Fleet Prison, on an allowance of sixpence a day, for contempt of the Court of Chancery ; considers the Libel Laws as not sufficiently severe, particularly when the conduct of Princes, Nobility, or Ministers, is called in question,—the greater the truth the greater the libel. A Tory approves of Man-traps and Spring-guns, and killing a Poacher now a d then, *in terrorem* : considers breaking pheasants' eggs a most heinous crime, but mixing poison in a liquor that is only drank by the poor and vulgar, a trifling one, especially when committed by a gentleman conspicuous for his loyalty. A Tory thinks cruelty to and gross neglect of poor lunatics not a sufficient reason for dismissing eminent medical men from their appointments to public hospitals ; condemns any improvement being made in the wretched interior of prisons, lest the poor should be induced to commit crimes in order to gain admittance ; stigmatizes philanthropy, feeling, and sympathy for the sufferings of the indigent poor, as cant, affectation, and hypocrisy, and ridicules interfering about chimney sweepers, parish apprentices, &c. A Tory would rather withhold relief from ten deserving objects than give to one impostor ; is averse to instructing

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the poor, lest they should be enabled to think and reason; is of opinion that the poor in general earn too much money, that a spare diet is best adapted to hard labour, and full living to ease and indolence; reprobates the absurdity of peasants and low mechanics becoming authors, and can discern no merit whatever in the works of a Bloomfield or a Burns; is against the diffusion of philosophical knowledge, by public lectures, as productive of self-conceit, scepticism, and opinions dangerous to social order; depreciates modern literature, and reads no poetry but birthday odes and verses in celebration of the battle of Waterloo. A Tory subscribes largely to German sufferers, while his own countrymen are starving at home, and lavishes immense sums on triumphal columns, &c., while the brave men who achieved the victories are pining in want. A Tory execrates the audacity of low-born fellows for presuming to form any opinions on political subjects, and harangue at public meetings to encourage the 'ignorant impatience of the people' at heavy taxation, low wages, and dear bread, and excite a spirit of discontent among the ignorant multitude. A Tory asserts that the present sufferings of the country are the usual and necessary consequence of the transition from war to peace, are merely temporary and trifling, though the gaols are filled with insolvent debtors, and criminals driven to theft by urgent want, the Gazette filled with bankruptcies, agriculture declining, commerce and manufactories nearly at a stand, while thousands are emigrating to foreign countries, whole parishes deserted, the

burthen of the poor rates intolerable, and yet insufficient to maintain the increasing number of the poor, and hundreds of once respectable householders reduced to the sad necessity of soliciting admission into the receptacles for paupers and vagabonds, and thousands wandering about in search of that employment which it is no longer in the power of the gentleman or farmer to bestow ! A Tory compares the situation of the country twenty-four years ago with the present period, and greatly prefers the latter, military glory being more than equivalent to all the distress experienced, which ought to silence all complaints. A Tory approves of the Alien Bill, and would never allow the unfortunate to find an asylum in this country. A Tory would never show mercy to a fallen foe, and is much dissatisfied that an Illustrious Character, who trusted the generosity of the British Government in preference to any other, should have been so slightly punished as sending him a prisoner for life to the sterile rock of St. Helena. A Tory considers boundless extravagance in certain persons as noble munificence and public spirit, benefiting the nation, by causing a circulation of money among Court tradesmen and artists, and so deems a tailor's bill, sometimes amounting to more than the annual pay of all the Admirals, Captains, and Lieutenants in the Navy,—a jeweller's, to more than the whole expense of the Expedition to Algiers,—and more money expended on useless furniture, pagodas, mandarins, Chinese lanterns, sphynxes, dragons, monsters, china vases, girandoles, clocks, snuff-boxes, and French frippery, than ten times the

amount of the munificent subscription of all the Royal Family and Cabinet Ministers for the relief of the starving poor ! A Tory execrated the cruelty of a few ignorant barbarians in putting to death two hundred unoffending Europeans, and approved of inflicting the severest punishment on the Infidels, but was averse from interfering when thousands of Protestants were tortured and massacred in an enlightened and Christian country ! A Tory in former times hated the Bourbons as the most inveterate enemies of England, execrated their bad faith, ambition, and tyranny, and despised the French nation for submitting to so vile a Government :—a Tory in these times hails their return to power with rapture, as ensuring good will and liberality towards England, and lasting peace to all the world ! A Tory on one side of St Stephen's sees ignorance, incapacity, knavery, deception, selfishness, arrogance, emptiness, inconsistency, dullness, and folly : on the other side, transcendent talent, great integrity, pure patriotism, extensive information, perfect disinterestedness, extensive philanthropy, commanding eloquence, Attic salt, and fundamental wisdom,—by whose wise counsels and unparalleled exertions, England has attained the summit of glory, restored the Pope, the Jesuits, and the Inquisition,—re-established military, feudal, and ecclesiastical power,—given to the Spanish Patriots their beloved Ferdinand, to the Italian States their adored Francis, to Genoa independence, to Prussia a free Government, to Norway a legitimate Monarch, to France Louis the desired, the just, the enlightened, the humane, the

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pattern of good faith and liberality, the enemy of oppression, bigotry and superstition, the chosen Sovereign of the French nation, and the friend of the human race !

Gloucester, October 1, 1816.

ILLUSTRATION OF A HACK-WRITER

THE *Courier* has the face to hazard the following piece of stuff; in an article on the celebration of the Triumph of Westminster :—

The flatterers of Kings and Ministers are reproached as sycophants. What are the flatterers of the people? He who tells a Monarch that he is the wisest, bravest, and best of men, is scoffed at for his servility. What then should be his reward who tells shoemakers, tallow-chandlers, and tailors, that they are paragons of wisdom, patriotism, virtue, and knowledge?

A notable discovery, i' faith! Did anybody tell the Westminster Electors that they were 'paragons?' And can all the supporters of Sir F. Burdett be included in the three classes here so impartially enumerated? And is there no difference between playing the sycophant to a king, who is the bestower of places, pensions; and sinecures, of titles and honours,—and telling a mixed assembly composed of the boasted middle classes of the metropolis of England, that they are the most 'enlightened' and 'patriotic' electors in the kingdom? The *Courier* tells us that the flatterer of Royalty is scoffed at, and asks what should be the reward of the flatterer of tailors and shoemakers. Does the *Courier* mean to say that any popular orator will seek out occasions to flatter assemblies of

ILLUSTRATION OF A HACK-WRITER

tailors and shoemakers for the sake of the temporary clap, and with the certainty of being 'scoffed at' by all the rest of the town, who are not present? Why does the candid journalist think it expedient to insert a grave report of the Westminster dinner? Do his loyal and religious readers scoff or bite their lips at it?—These are puzzling questions for this facetious discoverer of analogies: lest he should not answer, we will in the meantime try to remove the wonder our readers may have felt at the above extract. A common-place blockhead will sometimes make a successful hack-writer, if his self-complacency keeps pace with his stupidity. We have an instance in

This fellow is a perfect Scrub, and yet would pass for a wag by dint of sheer impertinence. He is sleek and in good case: and is satisfied with that and with his pay, without the applause of the many, which he cannot get. He publishes a quarto volume of criticisms, and advertises at the end that if nobody answers, that is, takes any notice of his crudities, he shall consider them as unanswerable. Nobody has read the book, and he has been puffed and blown up with an opinion of himself ever since, in the manner we see 'Oh! for a Muse of *flesh*,' he may exclaim as he sits down to his daily task. His fat keeps him company, and his conceit keeps his folly in countenance. He wheezes out a sentence, and sweats with all the inspiration of official authority. He finds himself dull, and thinks it a good joke he has nothing to say, and sets to work more basely than ever

'And scribbles, as he sits, for want of thought.'

ILLUSTRATION OF A HACK-WRITER

He is a sprightly tool, and rolls and wriggles and crawls about in the rank corruptions of the press like a maggot in a rotten cheese. He has the manner of a person waked out of a sound nap by a smart blow across the shoulders, who looks about him, rubs his eyes, and cries, 'Bless me,' with great alacrity. His obtuseness keeps him on the alert. He is in a state of continual liveliness, bustle, and surprise from the shock between his understanding and common sense and honesty. He is all alive, because he did not perceive a thing at first; thinks his not understanding your drift exceedingly droll and laughable; blunders again, and when he discovers his mistake, fancies he has you at an advantage. He cannot make out the construction of a paragraph in 'the leading journal of Europe,' and calls it bad grammar. This he thinks a lucky hit, it produces a smart controversy, and the combatants are well matched.—'weigh them, and a feather will turn the scale of their *avoids*.' He has no notion of principle, and chuckles over this as a notable discovery. He picks up a lie or a sophism; and repeats it with hireling pertness and gravity, for the benefit of the clergy, gentry, and the respectable part of the community in general, who are readers of the * * * * *! In shuffling off an objection he first reduces it to his own standard of no meaning, and then answers it very wisely. His happy incapacity admits just so much of an idea as leaves no thought and no feeling. The sound is absorbed in his 'fair, large ears'; while the sense rolls off from the well-oiled surface of his mind and body. By natural assimilation whatever his pen

ILLUSTRATION OF A HACK-WRITER

touches turns to wordy, nauseous impertinence ; and to convict him of a breach of probity or make him ashamed of a lie, it would be necessary to endue him with a new faculty, and to let him see that there is anything in the world of the slightest importance that is not a mere bagatelle, but as it furnishes matter for his interest, servility, callous foppery, pertness, and conceit.

LORD BYRON'S TRAGEDY OF
'MARINO FALIERO'

WE cannot speak in terms of very enthusiastic praise of this historical play. Indeed, it hardly corresponds to its title. It has little of a local or circumstantial air about it. We are not violently transported to the time or scene of action. We know not much about the plot, about the characters, about the motives of the persons introduced, but we know a good deal about their sentiments and opinions on matters in general, and hear some very fine descriptions from their mouths; which would, however, have become the mouth of any other individual in the play equally well, and the mouth of the noble poet better than that of any of his characters. We have, indeed, a previous theory, that Lord Byron's genius is not dramatic, and the present performance is not one that makes it absolutely necessary for us to give up that theory. It is very inferior to *Manfred*, both in beauty and interest. The characters and situations there were of a romantic and poetical cast, mere creatures of the imagination; and the sentiments such as the author might easily conjure up by fancying himself on enchanted ground, and adorn with all the illusions that hover round the poet's pen, 'prouder than when blue Iris berds.' The more the writer

indulged himself in following out the phantoms of a morbid sensibility, or lapt himself in the voluptuous dream of his own existence, the nearer he would approach to the truth of nature, the more he would be identified with the airy and preternatural personages he represented. But here he descends to the ground of fact and history; and we cannot say that in that circle he treads with the same firmness of step, that he has displayed boldness and smoothness of wing in soaring above it. He paints the cloud, or the rainbow in the cloud; or dives into the secret and subterraneous workings of his own breast; but he does not, with equal facility or earnestness, wind into the march of human affairs upon the earth, or mingle in the throng and daily conflict of human passions. There is neither action nor reaction in his poetry; both which are of the very essence of the Drama. He does not commit himself in the common arena of man; but looks down, from the high tower of his rank, nay, of his genius, on the ignobler interests of humanity, and describes them either as a dim and distant phantasmagoria or a paltry fantoccini exhibition, scarce worth his scorn. He fixes on some point of imagination or of brooding thought as a resting-place for his own pride and irritability, instead of seeking to borrow a new and unnecessary stimulus from the busy exploits and over-wrought feelings of others. His Lordship's genius is a spirit of necromancy or of misanthropy, not of humanity. He is governed by antipathies more than by sympathies; but the genius of dramatic poetry is like charity which 'endureth much, is patient, and

by humbling itself, is exalted' Lord Byron for instance, sympathizes readily with Dante, who was a poet, a patriot, a noble Florentine, and exile from his country : he can describe the feelings of Dante, for in so doing, he does little more than describe his own : he makes nothing out of Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice, and cares nothing about him, for he himself is neither a warrior, a statesman, nor a conspirator. Lord Byron can gaze with swimming eyes upon any of the great lights of Italy, and view them through the misty, wide-spread glory of lengthening centuries : that is, he can take a high and romantic interest in them, as they appear to us and to him, but he cannot take an historical event in her annals, transport us to the time and place of action, give us a real, living interest in the scene, and by filling the mind with the agonizing hopes, and panic-fears, and incorrigible will, and sudden projects of the authentic actors in the world's volume, charm us out of ourselves, and make us forget that there are such half-faced fellows as readers, authors, or critics in existence. Lord Byron's page has not this effect ; it is modern, smooth, fresh from Mr. Murray's, and does not smack of the olden time. It is not rough, Gothic, pregnant with past events, unacquainted with the present time, glowing with the spirit of that dark and fiery age : but strewn with the flowers of poetry and the tropes of rhetoric. The author does not try to make us *overhear* what old Faliero, and his young wife, and his wily, infuriated accomplices would say, but makes them his proxies to discuss the topics of love and marriage, the claims of rank and

common justice, or to describe a scene by moonlight, with a running allusion to the pending controversy between his Lordship, Mr. Bowles, and Mr. Campbell, on the merits of the natural and artificial style in poetry 'That was not the way' of our first tragic writers, nor is it (thank God) that of some of the last 'One touch of nature makes the whole world kin;'—one line of Webster, Decker, or Ford (to say nothing of Shakspeare), is worth all the didactic and descriptive paraphrases of what would neither be seen nor felt by men in a state of strong agitation as they occur in this play. We cannot call to mind, after reading it, a single electric shock of passion; not a spark of genius struck out of the immediate occasion, like fire out of the flint, not one revelation of our inmost nature, forced from the rack of restless circumstance. But this is all that is truly dramatic in any tragedy or poem: the rest is but a form of words, an imposing display of ingenuity, or understanding, or fancy, which the writer (however excellent he may be in any of these respects) might as well or much better make in his own person. We think most highly of Lord Byron's powers 'on this side of idolatry'; but we do not think those powers are dramatic, nor can we regard the present work as a splendid exception to that general opinion. But enough of prefatory remark.

Marino Faliero is without a plot, without characters, without fluctuating interest, and without the spirit of dialogue. The events hang together very slenderly and unaccountably. Steno (one of the Senate) has slandered the Doge's wife, Angiolina,

and is adjudged by his peers to a month's imprisonment only, which is considered by the haughty Faliero as equivalent to an acquittal and a deliberate insult to himself; and he resolves to revenge it by destroying the senate and overturning the state. His lady endeavours to pacify him under this indignity, says she is very indifferent to the matter herself, and a long, cool, dispassionate argument follows, in which she enters into her sentiments of virtue and honour, and gives her reasons at large for marrying the Doge (who is an old man but choleric withal), which amounts to this, that she did not care at all about him. The whole of her connection with the play is a very Platonic sort of business. She neither precipitates nor retards the plot, is neither irritated by the imputation on her own character, nor overwhelmed by her husband's fate. She is a very fair, unsullied piece of marble. Just at the moment that the Doge has received this mortal affront from the senate, Israel Bertuccio (an old fellow-soldier and retainer of his) has been struck by a Venetian nobleman, and comes to his patron 'with blood upon his face' to supplicate for revenge. This facilitates the object of the Doge. Israel Bertuccio is commander of the arsenal, and it so happens that a conspiracy is already hatching there, among the officers and workmen, to redress the wrongs of the state, and cut the throats of reverend rogues in office. These things fall out luckily together: there is no connection between them, but they serve as a peg to hang the plot on. The Doge is introduced to their council and becomes their leader; but, though he is

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represented as a fiery, untameable character, a rough soldier, he pules and whines through the rest of the piece, is continually reproaching his companions with his own scruples of conscience, making out that they have nothing to do with them, because they are only base plebeians, not knit to the senate by the ties of honour and friendship; but yet he persists in carrying into effect his purpose of revenge, and in assisting theirs, of patriotism and justice. This is not very natural nor very interesting. The plot is defeated by the old trick of one of the conspirators being a little softer-hearted than the rest, and the Doge ends his inauspicious career by an elaborate denunciation of the senate, and prophetic view of the fall of Venice. Lord Byron has taken no advantage of Otway's *Venice Preserved* to heighten his plot, though the outline is much the same; nor is there any tendency to plagiarism from other authors, except an unaccountable pilfering of single phrases from Shakspeare. We will just give a few of these.

. . . *There's no such thing*

We will find other means to *ake all even.*

. . . To pass from mouth to mouth
Of loose *mechanics.*

. . . In the *olden time*
Some sacrifices asked a single victim.

There's blood upon thy face

I am a man, my lord

Groan with the *strong conception* of their wrongs.

But let that pass.—*We will be jocund.*

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The same sin that overthrew the angels.

But I have set my little left
Of life upon this cast

It is our knell, or that of Venice.

We will not *scotch*, but kill.

And calmly wash those hands *incarnadine*

Among the poetical passages in this play, we might instance the following as some of the most striking. The Doge, in addressing his nephew on the cause of their revenge, says passionately—

—Aye, think upon the cause—

Forget it not.—When you lie down to rest,
Let it be black among your dreams, and when
The morn' returns, so let it stand between
The sun and you, as an ill-omen'd cloud
Upon a summer-day of festival
So will it stand to me.

Angiolina's description of her husband is also very graceful.

—Would he were return'd!

He has been much disquieted of late;
And Time, which has not tamed his fiery spirit,
Nor yet enfeebled even his mortal frame,
Which seems to be more nourish'd by a soul
So quick and restless that it would consume
Less hardy clay,—Time has but little power
On his resentments or his griefs. Unlike
To other spirits of his order, who,
In the first burst of passion, pour away
Their wrath or sorrow, all things wear in him
An aspect of eternity: his thoughts,

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His feelings, passions, good or evil, all
 Have nothing of old age : and his bold brow
 Bears but the scars of mind, the thoughts of years,
 Not in their decrepitude . and he of late
 Has been more agitated than his wont
 Would he were come ! for I alone have power,
 Upon his troubled spirit.

We do not think the Noble Author has, in the sequel, embodied this *Titianesque* conception of his hero, Faliero. On the contrary, he is tetchy and wayward, sceptical, querulous, and full of the gusts and flaws of passion. As an instance of mere haste and irascibility, arising out of nothing and subsiding into nothing, take his captious assumption of an agony of rage at the mention of his son, or what he chuses to interpret as such.

Israel Bertuccio. You must come alone.

Doge. With but my nephew.

Israel Bertuccio. Not were he your son

Doge Wretch ! darest thou name my son ? He died in
 arms

At Sapienza for this faithless state.

Oh ! that he were alive, and I in ashes !

Or that he were alive, ere I be ashes !

I should not need the dubious aid of strangers.

Israel Bertuccio. Not one of all those strangers whom
 thou doubttest,

But will regard thee with a filial feeling,

So that thou keep'st a father's faith with them.

Doge (answers). *The die is cast. Where is the place of
 meeting ?*

There is very little of keeping, or of ' the aspect of eternity,' in this.

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Angiolina and Marianna, her friend, thus moralize very prettily on the distinction between virtue and reputation.

Marianna Yet full many a dame,
Stainless and faithful, would feel all the wrong
Of such a slander ; and less rigid ladies,
Such as abound in Venice, would be loud
And all-inexorable in their cry
For justice

Angiolina. This but proves it is the name
And not the quality they prize · the first
Have found it a hard task to hold their honour,
If they require it to be blazon'd forth,
And those who have not kept it, seek its seeming,
As they would look out for an ornament
Of which they feel the want, but not because
They think it so ; *they live in others' thoughts,*
And would seem honest as they must seem fair.

The Doge presently after addresses his wife to the following purpose

—Well I know
'Twere hopeless for humanity to dream
Of honesty in such infected blood,
Although 'twere wed to him it covets most :
An incarnation of the poet's god
In all his marble-chisell'd beauty, or
The demi-deity, Alcides, in
His majesty of superhuman manhood,
Would not suffice to bind when virtue is not, &c.

To say nothing of the allusion to Shakspeare in the above passage, it is Lord Byron speaking in the nineteenth century, and not the Doge of Venice in

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the fourteenth. The author has *virtù* running in his head, more than virtue. There are several of these anachronisms of style and sentiment scattered throughout. We have neither space nor inclination to quote them. The following speech of the Doge, giving directions for the first raising the alarm of insurrection, is as spirited as anything in the play.

—By different routes

Let your march be directed, every sixty
Entering a separate avenue, and still
Upon the way let your cry be of war
*And of the Genoese fleet, by the first dawn*¹
Discern'd before the port, form round the palace,
Within whose court will be drawn out in arms
My nephew and the clients of our house,
Many and martial, while the bell tolls on,
Shout ye, 'Saint Mark!—the foe is on the waters!'

It is no wonder that Calendaro, after this, exclaims—

I see it now—But on, my noble lord.

This is what we mean by dramatic writing. In reading such lines as these, we not only read fine poetry, but we feel, see, and hear the genius of the place, the age, and people, stirring within us and about us. Dramatic poetry, as Shakspeare says of war, should be 'lively, audible, and full of vent.'

Among the passages calculated for action and stage effect, are the Doge's tearing off and trampling on the ducal bonnet in the first act, his presentation to the conspirators in the third, and the entrance of the Signor of the Night to arrest him as a traitor

¹ This is a fiction, a *ruse de guerre*

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just as he is expecting the signal for the destruction
of the senate in the fourth As he is waiting for the
tolling of the bell, he hears other noises

—Hark! was there not
A murmur as of distant voices, and
The tramp of feet in martial unison?

Then

Enter a Signor of the Night, with Guards
Doge, I arrest thee of high treason, &c.

As a specimen of the political and practical tone
of the tragedy, we shall select only one passage.

Israel Bertuccio. We have them in the toils—it cannot
fail!

Now thou'rt indeed a sovereign, and wilt make
A name immortal greater than the greatest
Free citizens have struck at kings ere now;
Cæsars have fallen, and even patrician hands
Have crush'd dictators, as the popular steel
Has reach'd patricians, but until this hour,
What prince has plotted for his people's freedom?
Or risk'd a life to liberate his subjects?

For ever, and for ever, they conspire
Against the people, to abuse their hands
To chains, but laid aside to carry weapons
Against the fellow nations, so that yoke
On yoke, and slavery and death may whet,
Not glut, the never-gorged Leviathan!

Now, my lord, to our enterprise, 'tis great,
And greater the reward; why stand you rapt?
A moment back, and you were all impatience!
Doge. And is it then decided? Must they die?
Israel Bertuccio. Who?

Doge My own friends by blood and courtesy,
And many deeds and days—the senators?
Israel Bertuccio You passed their sentence, and it is a
just one.

Doge Ay, so it seems, and so it is to you,
You are a patriot, a plebeian Gracchus—
The rebel's oracle—the people's tribune—
I blame you not, you act in your vocation;
They smote you, and oppress'd you, and despised you,
So they have me: but you ne'er spake with them,
You never broke their bread, nor shared their salt,
You never had their wine-cup at your lips,
You grew not up with them, nor laugh'd, nor wept,
Nor held a revel in their company;
Ne'er smiled to see them smile, nor claim'd then smile
In social interchange for yours, nor trusted
Nor wore them in your heart of hearts, I have
These hairs of mine are grey, and so are theirs,
The elders of the council, I remember
When all our locks were like the raven's wing,
As we went forth to take our prey around
The isles, wrung from the false Mahometan,
And can I see them dabbled o'er with blood?
Each stab to them will seem my suicide

We agree with Israel Bertuccio, who interrupts
him here—

Doge! *Doge!* this vacillation is unworthy
Of a child, &c

It is not the proper way of *backing his friends*
We had intended to give *Lioni* the Senator's de-
scription of a Venetian moonlight, but it is too
long, and the public are all but gluttoned with the
abstract beauty and dazzling power of Lord Byron's

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pen There are some strange inversions of style in different parts of the work, and two instances of bad English.

And in my mind, there is no traitor like
 He whose domestic treason plants the poignard
 Within the breast which trusted to its truth

Lady! *the natural distraction of*
 Thy thoughts at such a moment *make* the question
 Merit forgiveness, &c.

The Doge of Venice, which is to be brought out this evening (April 25th) at Drury Lane, will hardly make a popular acting play. Any thing written by Lord Byron, must be read.

The Prophecy of Dante, appended to the tragedy, is a rhapsody in his Lordship's manner, but not in his best manner. The description of Italy, as it bursts upon the traveller from the brow of the Alps, is admirable; but it is such as might come from the lips of a stranger, a native of the frozen North, like Lord Byron, rather than from the old poet Dante, who had bathed from his youth in her vales and azure skies, and was 'native and endued unto that sunny element.' The author speaks of continuing and completing this fragment, if he meets with encouragement to do so. But is it not for him to write what he pleases, and for the public to read in spite of themselves?

¹ It was acted, but did not succeed.

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM'S
SIR MARMADUKE MAXWELL'

THE Dramatic Poem, which occupies the chief bulk of this agreeable volume, has been so highly spoken of by the first literary authority in this country that it is almost needless, not to say impertinent, to add our mite of approbation to it. The Author of *Waverley* thus expresses his cordial opinion of it in his Preface to the *Fortunes of Nigel*.

Author. There is my friend Allan has written just such a play as I might write myself, in a very sunny day, and with one of Bramah's extra patent-pens. I cannot make neat work without such appurtenances.

Captain Clutterbuck. Do you mean Allan Ramsay?

Author. No, nor Barbara Allan either. I mean Allan Cunningham, who has just published his tragedy of Sir Marmaduke Maxwell, full of merry-making and murdering, kissing and cutting of throats, and passages which lead to nothing, and which are very pretty passages for all that. Not a glimpse of probability is there about the plot, but so much animation in particular passages, and such a vein of poetry through the whole, as I dearly wish I could infuse into my Culinary Remains, should I ever be tempted to publish them. With a popular impress, people would read and admire the beauties of Allan—as it is, they may, perhaps, only note his defects—or, what is worse, not note him at all. But never mind

them, honest Allan, you are a credit to Caledonia for all that. There are some lyrical effusions of his too, which you would do well to read, Captain. ‘It’s hame and it’s hame,’ is equal to Burns

We ourselves agree to this unequivocal and enviable testimony in its favour; and we are the more glad to avail ourselves of it, as (besides private reasons which would lead us to avoid anything that might be construed into a *puff*) it enables us to speak our minds more freely with respect to a few faults which strike us (like specks on the sun’s disk) in this very interesting performance.—We think (though we do not know that this is a fault) that the effect of this Dramatic Poem is more that which arises from the perusal of a romance than of a tragedy. The interest of the story prevails over the force of the dialogue, though the last is spirited and natural: the characters serve more as vehicles to convey a series of extraordinary incidents than to display the extreme workings of the passions or the hidden springs of action. We read on, without being violently stimulated or much startled, with an unabated and personal anxiety about the event of the fable and the fate of the different characters—with a love of the good, and a hatred of the vicious agents in the plot—as we should read the narrative of any striking occurrence in actual life, put into pleasing and fanciful verse. Perhaps Mr Cunningham too often lays aside the tragic buskin to assume the Minstrel’s harp, or to rehearse the affecting passages of Traditional Literature. We can attribute this not more to a want of confirmed practice than to an amiable modesty. Scarce

conscious of universally-acknowledged merit in his favourite pursuits, it is no wonder that he touches the strings with a trembling and uncertain hand in a new department of art. Increased experience would give greater boldness, and greater boldness would be crowned with more triumphant success; for our author does not want resources in feeling or nature. In case Mr. Cunningham gives us another Scottish tragedy, we would advise him (as far as he may think our opinion worth attending to) to get rid of the mixture of quaint proverbial phrases and northern dialect. A pastoral drama (like Allan Ramsay's *Gentle Shepherd*) may be written entirely in the Scottish idiom. A tragedy, or even a dramatic poem, with stately and heroic characters in it, should (we conceive) be written entirely in English. the jumbling of the two languages together is decidedly bad in either case, and is only proper to the narrative or ballad style, where the dignity of no individual is committed, and where the author is privileged (as a remote spectator of the scene) to speak either in his own person or to throw in occasional sprinklings of local and national expressions, with a view to produce a more lively sense of reality and to give it a dramatic air. But where the *form* itself is dramatic, the same licence (to our feelings) is neither necessary nor allowable. In a romantic description of an invincible knight of old, it may be a peasant that speaks, or from whom we have learnt the story,—we may avail ourselves therefore of all the bye-resources, the quaint or casual varieties of the language, to touch, to identify, to surprise. But where the knight himself speaks

in his own character, his language should be one, and it should be (according to the prevailing prejudice) dignified. Otherwise, ‘the blank verse halts for it.’ Such words as *shealing*, and *cusbat*, and *cummer*, and *dool*, come in very well among the rude rhymes of a ballad-strain, which (for anything that appears to the contrary) might have been said or sung by an old Highland bagpipe-player five hundred years ago—they assist the illusion, which is favourable to the poet, and flattering to the reader—and we can turn at leisure to the *glossary* to know the meaning, as an improvement of the mind and an enlargement of our knowledge. But it is not so well, when a noble and accomplished person is speaking in good set lines of ten syllables, to have to stop him repeatedly with ‘What was that you said, Sir?’ A tragedy is known to be a modern production—it has not the smack of antiquity in it—and though it places us immediately in contact with the *Dramatis Personæ*, it is not by carrying us back to them, but by bringing them down to us. The poet, who introduces them to the modern public, like a Gentleman-usher of the Black-Rod, must see to it that they have their proper cue and costume. We would, in a word, make the same remonstrance to Mr. Cunningham that a late Scotch peer did (we think somewhat prematurely) to Mr. Mathews on a parallel occasion. The noble person we allude to had been to see one of Mr Mathews’s AT HOMES, and afterwards went into his dressing-room to congratulate him on his success ‘I admire your performance much—it is quite charming. Your Frenchman is excellent,

not that I'm a judge myself, for I have never been in France; but J says it's excellent; so it must be so. There is, however, one thing, my dear friend, that I would advise you to leave out—your old Scotchwoman. Depend upon it, it won't do. It's bad. The Scotch dialect is a thing that is at present quite obsolete, nobody understands it. *In foc, mon, we in Edinburgh now speak pure St. James's!*' The serious Scottish Muse may, at least, aspire to be upon a par with the good people of Edinburgh.

The only important drawback on the effect of the poem before us is what strikes us as the improbability of the main incident on which the story hinges. Halbert Comyne and his comrades enter Caerlaverock Castle as old friends and acquaintances, and in the middle of his hall murder Lord Maxwell, and carry off by force his wife and son, without its being once suspected by the servants and neighbours that the deed was done by these unhallowed inmates. What adds to the singularity is, that they are not murdered or seized upon in their beds, or in some obscure corner of the forest, but in the midst of their own castle, the menials being sent out on the way to a merry-making for that express purpose. The discovery of this strange secret forms the chief business of the plot, and as it is continually recurred to, the inherent incongruity of the thing hangs an air of mystery over the whole narrative, much greater than that which arises from the preternatural agency either of witches or spirits. That Halbert Comyne, the next heir to the title and estate of the old lord, should come to Caerlaverock

Castle with a crew of desperados—that, on the third night after, the owner and his family should disappear—that Halbert Comyne should wake up the servants in the middle of the night to tell them what has happened—and that not a shadow of suspicion should light upon him or his accomplices, except from the circumstance of Simon Graeme and Mark Macgee being clandestinely stationed so as to see two of the villains depositing the body of Lord Maxwell under a tree, and through the incantations and preternatural forebodings of Mabel Moran, seems to us quite out of the question.

As to the introduction of spiritual machinery into the tragedy of *Sir Marmaduke Maxwell*, we do not, nor are we disposed to object to it generally, nor could we, if we would. Mr. Cunningham has too many and too great authorities on his side. But we think he has brought real and fantastic apparitions into contact, on one or two occasions, in a way to distract the attention, and consequently to stagger belief. Thus Halbert Comyne, when he visits Mabel Moran in the cave, is terrified first by the real ghost of Lord Maxwell, deceased, and next by the pretended apparition of Lady Maxwell, who is still *in the body*. A real ghost, we certainly think, to challenge our faith, should have the field to himself, and not enter the lists with the living. The contrast annihilates the continuity of our ideas—the substantial spirit overlays the shadowy one, and one or other is infallibly rendered ridiculous. We are frequently reminded, in the marshalling of these dreadful appearances, of Richard and Macbeth

SIR MARMADUKE MAXWELL'

But enough, and indeed too much of captious criticism. We will now proceed to lay before our readers one or two passages, which will enable them to judge of the beauty and felicity of execution to be found in this attractive performance

OUTLINES OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

OUTLINES OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

POLITICAL Economy has been called a science. I do not know why, except in the sense that you cannot have your cake and eat it, or that if a thing consists of so many parts, the more you add to one heap, the less will remain of the other. But this is by no means the application that has been made of it. On the contrary, the whole object of the science has been to shew that by giving to the rich you take nothing from the poor. Mine is, I hope, an honest view of it. This same honesty is, I know, by some accounted foolishness, and so it may be as to the individual, but not as to the subject. For my part, I wish for no higher wisdom than that which arises from a mind perfectly free from every selfish and sinister bias. I have been advised to write a critical essay, and I think I could do it on this very subject. I should be like the fellow who came up to London with a barrel-organ at his back and expected at least to pass for a Rossini. I should begin with the geometrical and arithmetical series, the praise of Mr. Malthus's originality, logic, and humanity, pass to the doubling of the population every twenty-five years in the United States of America, digress to the cultivation of the potato in Ireland (which country I should abuse

because it is not some other), recommend the education of the poor as a preventive of mobs, and conclude with a sublime eulogy of the science of political economy as 'fairly worth the seven.'

I. I shall begin with what I think of more importance or at least newer, the refutation of the aristocratic sophism that war and taxes do not impoverish a country. Now if that were the case, why do we go to war with our enemies as a punishment, instead of inflicting it on our friends as a benefit or idle amusement at worst? It is pretended that the taxes which are raised to support war are presently returned into the hands of the payers, and that the community receives back in the payment of labour, in the encouragement of arts and industry, all that has been previously taken out of their pockets, just as the water drawn from the earth in vapours descends to it in genial and refreshing showers. But if the poor are none the worse for the taxes, those who receive them, the rich or the government, can be none the better, why then collect them again? One part of the community being indebted to another has been compared to a man and his wife, playing cards, where the family loses nothing: but a man and his wife do not pay, at least if they have a common purse, so that nothing is gained by this simile. The way in which war and taxes do injury is in two particulars: (1) by waste or unproductive labour, (2) by throwing the money of the community into masses by monopolies, places, &c., bestowed at the discretion of the government.

(1) The greater part of the expenses of war are

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laid out in means of annoyance only to other nations, not in anything serviceable to your own, in making gunpowder, in building or blowing up ships of war, in burning towns, laying waste countries, &c., &c. Now all that is laid out in this way is so much wealth and useful labour divested from the proper objects of political economy (except in case of absolute necessity, which does not alter the question of expense) such as the cultivation of the ground, the building of houses, the making of articles of use and convenience, &c. If war were in itself a thriving trade, governments could carry it on upon commercial principles, and, having once a capital to begin with, grow rich every year, instead of having to come to the people for fresh supplies to pay the interest of the principal which is always sunk. But government is always a heavy tax upon the country, and war, their most expensive occupation, for the most part a merely destructive art. If we consider the stock-in-trade of government at the end of a war, and ask what they would get by setting up to auction the hulls of disabled vessels, empty gunpowder casks, the battered walls of ruined fortresses, we need pursue the inquiry no further to make up our minds on the subject of the lucrative nature of war establishments. Those governments that make great conquest of territory and treasure, &c., or secure monopoly of trade, gain but what the others lose in proportion, and all the labours and expense of carrying on the war and effecting the transfer is a drain on the natural resources of property of one or both countries. The reason why a country

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seems to flourish in war time is that capital is then drawn out and forced into circulation every year, but in a way that produces no return, and, as this must be paid for afterwards, hangs a dead weight round the neck of the industry of a country ever after, and the longer it is persisted in, grows worse, like the effects of all intemperance and violent momentary excitement. Mr Southey says that war was a customer to the Birmingham-Sheffield market to the amount of sixteen millions yearly. if this was a sheer benefit, and not in the end a sheer loss, why not continue the war nominally, that is, keep on ordering the goods, and fire off cannon and brandish swords innocently in the air? The war would be equally a customer to the market, only less blood would be shed and less malice engendered

(2) It is argued that though large fortunes are amassed in war by government contracts, or large revenues, salaries, pensions, &c., bestowed on particular individuals and families at the expense of the people, this does not signify in the least, or is indeed rather a good, inasmuch as the money returns into the pockets of the people again in the shape of payments for labour, building fine houses, making rich furniture, maintaining large establishments of servants, &c. Now this is very fine talking. but the question lies here—for whose benefit is all this? The labour of the community is paid for, it is true, but so it would be if the money had remained in the hands of the mass of the community, and in that case the produce of the labour would have gone to benefit the

community at large, whereas by being accumulated into the hands of a few it goes to pamper and indulge the luxury of these few. Thus, the same number of hands would be employed and maintained in building ten comfortable living houses or one splendid mansion. so far, in the payment of labour, the effect is the same, but all the difference lies in the good resulting from the labour, in the case ten families are commodiously lodged, in the other, one is magnificently lodged and the other nine have no roof to shelter them.

This rule holds proportionably with respect to the results of all unequal division of property. No one will pretend but, if the money had been left originally in the hands of the ten persons, they would have agreed voluntarily to this application of it, but not to the building of one fine house for one fine gentleman and going without any themselves, it is therefore forced, injurious, and, unless necessary, (which is seldom the case), unjust. So with respect to household furniture, articles of luxury, &c. If the public agree upon some magnificent public work, that is another question; it is voluntary and calculated to gratify the public use and taste and not to pamper the pride and egotism of an individual. So in the maintenance or support of arts, it ought to proceed from the free will of individuals, not from forced contributions on the public. Nothing can be clearer than that the salaries of actors and public performers are well earned: they are fixed by the number of those who go to see, not by a vote of a treasury bench. No one will maintain, I should think, that all labour

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is equally good and useful, if equally well paid. or that it is not the work produced or who reaps the benefit of it, but the paying of the workmen, that forms the whole sum and substance of political economy. If so, the paying a man for doing nothing, for digging a hole in the ground and filling it up again, and standing at the back of another's chair, would be equally useful and indispensable to the welfare of the community as the employing him in the most necessary sorts of labour, the cultivation of the ground, &c. Or if so, it would be equally wise and politic to pay a man for destroying corn or other wholesome food after it was raised as for raising it, or pulling down a wall and building it up again.

This also shews the inutility of paying for mere labour, which is mere idleness if it does no good. Men may as well stand still as use their hands to no purpose; throwing sand into the sea, for instance. All the use of labour is to multiply the products of art or nature, and whatever does this with least expense or trouble is best, and leaves an opening for employing the surplus labour in lightening other labour, which cannot be so well abridged. This is the use of machinery. If the surplus hands are not wanted to do the labour which is necessary in agriculture, they may at least be usefully employed in dividing it. Thus the lacqueys of the great must eat, if they were farmers' men, but they would not in that case eat more, and the farmers' men would work less, and not be absolutely ground into the earth as they are at present. Q.E.D.

II. A great deal has been said on the doctrine of rent and on the definition of value, as it appears to me, without sufficient accuracy or foundation. For example, it has been laid down as a rule, that the value of anything depends invariably on the cost and labour necessary to produce it. Now if so, and if this be the only circumstance, then any thing on which the same labour has been bestowed, would be of equal value, which is absurd. If a thing when done is of no use, all the labour and expense in the world bestowed on it will not make it of value; so that besides prime cost, usefulness or desirableness must come into a good definition of value. If another wants any thing very much and it has cost a great deal to make or get it, I, of course, make him pay the more for it; but he will not do this, unless his desire of the thing, that is, the use it is to him, is greater than his want of the money for other purposes. Value depends on two things, the want which one person has of a thing, and the power of another to withhold it from him till he can get no more for it.

I will give a familiar instance. Suppose a person to have just given ten guineas for a watch which he is from some circumstance forced to pawn: how much will he get for it? According to the above definition of value, it is worth and will fetch just as much as it has cost. No such thing. The immediate distress of the person is known by the circumstance of his wanting to sell it, and the purchaser will offer him, not what it has cost, but the lowest possible sum that his necessities may compel him to take for it. Thus, then, it appears that the

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ability to take advantage of another's distress enters into the principle of value or bargain making, and that the rich and powerful have consequently and at all times an advantage over the poor in this respect.

The other definition, I grant, looks fair and plausible, as if industry was always rewarded, and every thing was paid for according to its practical value, so that society was a perfect piece of mechanism, and all its distributing and awards were attended with a more than poetical and mathematical justice. It may answer the views of the great landholders and capitalists to be told this, and of our place-hunting philosophers to tell it them!

Again it is pretended that rent is a mechanical, and invariable quantity, being the exact amount of the difference between the richest and the poorest soils brought into cultivation. Now this again, under a mask of mathematical precision, is a fallacy, taking for granted the very point in dispute as a self-evident proposition. For what is the poorest soil brought into cultivation? Not that beyond which, as a fixed limit, any cultivation whatever is impossible, as the barren rock, but that the cultivation of which will no longer adequately reward or maintain the labourer. So the price of labour, over which the surplus produce of the soil is rent, does not depend on physical boundary, or a soil of a certain degree of barrenness, but the degree of poverty in the soil brought into cultivation will depend on a moral calculation—what is the adequate reward of labour? This, however, has been attempted to be reduced to a *minimum*

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by saying the smallest wage that will support life : which is another verbal fallacy, delightful for those to contemplate who wish to keep their money in their pockets by the advice of sophists *et cum privilegio philosophiae*, but of no other coherence or validity whatever ; for a man who is merely kept alive is not in a condition to work, much less to work hard, and the interval between *just famishing* and *well off* in the condition of the labouring class is a wide, indefinite, and important one, though it is a logical point with these reasoners who feel strong in the badness of their cause. It is some difference whether a man has one or two meals a day, whether he has meat for his dinner once a week or not, whether he does or does not lie, coarse indeed, but warm, whether he is in rags or decently and comfortably clad. All these distinctions are looked down upon from the lofty heights of Political Economy Lecture-Desks, and lost in the cant phrase, *the lowest possible means of subsistence*

If we suppose property to be limited, all the same consequences will follow with respect to landlord and labourer, with or without the inequality in the goodness of the soil for he who has no land of his own to till must till that of another *for a consideration*, and this consideration will depend not on the gradations of natural soil but on the degrees of spirit, intelligence, and previous habits of comfort, and what they conceive to be their rights, in the poorer members of the community. It is a mere question of haggling in the market, and he who has saved a little money and

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knows that others are of his way of thinking as to what is the *fair rate* of wages, will stand a better chance in holding out against their reduction, either direct or indirect, than he who, being without resource or advantage, lies at the mercy of a merciless dictator and tyrant, who, the more helpless and depressed he is, depresses him the more and calls it justice, appealing to Mr. Malthus and the Scotch polemics, who damn men to starve in this world with the same eagerness and malignity that they formerly damned them to eternal torments in the other. 'We cannot give up our Hell,' in one way or other. If one acre of bad ground is brought into cultivation, will this reduce the price of labour to that level?

I say then that the maximum of wages depends on the human will, or conventional, not physical, causes; on the resolution to demand and the power to withhold, and, if society pleases, the wages may be doubled, as they may be reduced to one half; or that, in what proportions the actual produce of the soil is shared, up to absolute equality, is not a thing of necessity, but choice. The tables are not full, while one person devours the produce of the labour of two, any more than the pit is full, while one person occupies two places or chuses to keep a place for a friend.

It was stated the other day in the papers that the effects that might result to the community, and to civilization in general, from Mr. Gurney's new invention of a steam-carriage to run on common roads, were incalculable, alluding to the immense number of horses now kept for stage coaches, and

the saving of all the expense, or turning it into a different channel for the support and growth of food for human beings. Now the consequences (however confessedly great) would not extend much farther than to bring the country back to where it was eighty or a hundred years before, as we may say, the invention of stage coaches; yet this assertion and sanguine prediction was made by one who holds any attempt at interference with Mr. Malthus's grinding law of necessity, or the mechanical effects of population on determining the results of human happiness and comfort, as wholly absurd and fruitless. If so much benefit can be done to society by a single invention, in leaving so much disposable food for the human population, who shall say what good cannot be done by other inventions or discoveries? But at any rate it must be granted by the persons so arguing, that this portion of subsistence has been artificially drawn off from the support of the mass of the community, to pamper the pride or pleasure of the idle or the wealthy in riding in stage coaches. The load that has been laid on the produce and industry of the country will now, it is said, be taken off by one man's ingenuity and science: it must therefore have been laid on by accidental circumstances and combinations, and not by unalterable and inevitable principles.

III Those who run their heads against Mr. Malthus's general doctrine, that population may increase faster than and beyond the means of subsistence, only run their heads against a post: all that can be done is to deny his sovereign right

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over this doctrine as the inventor and legislator of it, to show his illogicality and inconsistency in reasoning upon what was not his own, and his perverse and partial application of a general and important principle.

The principle of population applies to all created beings: but we hear of it only in relation to the poor and their encroachments on the higher classes, as if the latter didn't breed and were not more likely to weigh down the general population than to be weighed down by it. For instance, the law of *primogeniture* leaves all the younger branches of rich and noble families to be provided for as adventurers by the State. they are in truth, as they have been forcefully denominated, 'state paupers'; it is not likely, however, that, with the notions and habits with which they are brought up, they will abate an inch of their dignity or luxurious and expensive style of living, and may we not hence account (that is, from the doubling of the aristocratic and pensioned part of the population and their maintenance in suitable style and affluence for the honour of the Corinthian capital) for the degradation and impoverishment of the lower classes, without supposing them to be doubled in like manner?

I asked a labouring peasant if he thought the distress in the neighbourhood arose from the increase of the working poor, or from there not being work enough for them to do? He said, No, that there were not more than were sufficient to do the necessary labour in harvest time, in seed time, and at other periods, but if they had

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to do certain things in summer they must be kept alive in winter. They could not go to sleep like flies. I asked if he thought there were more people in the place than there used to be? He said not, but the expense of living was twice what it was when he was a young man thirty years ago, and the wages were no higher than they were then. He said he and his father and brother could then get a shilling apiece a day by hard labour, and that he got no more now to maintain his whole family, which could not be done. A quartern loaf, he said, then was 7d., now it was 1s. or 14d. Mutton was 2d or 3d. a pound instead of 6d. or 7d. Bacon in like manner butter was also 5d. or 6d. which now cost 11d. in the market. So that in truth a poor family was reduced to live upon half of what it then did, that is, if the doctrine of the modern economists be true, they live upon the half of the lowest possible means that it is possible to live upon. He added that formerly a poor man's wife and children got something considerable as a help by spinning and other handicraft, which was now done away with; but he allowed that in this respect the machines had done as much good as harm by cheapening gowns and clothes of different descriptions. My informant also considered the inclosing of commons as a hardship on the poor (and no advantage to the rich), by depriving them of the means of keeping a pig, two or three geese or fowls, perhaps even a cow, &c. He said the land was of no use to its owners on a large scale, and was only good to be pecked and nibbled at in a small way and by those on the spot

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Now then, here is the fact that the labouring population has not doubled, but the price of provisions has, that of labour remaining the same, so that the condition of the poor is doubly more wretched and uncomfortable than it was, and I attribute this result to the increase of taxes, wars, pensions and large fortunes got by monopolies, all to maintain an over-abundant oligarchy in their wonted ease and insolence, which, the production being truly limited, can only be done by pressing upon and robbing by legislative enactment the already poor and oppressed classes.

IV. Tythes. Mr. Burke says, 'The people of England like to see 10 or 20,000 pounds a year in the hands of a Bishop of London or Ely as well as in the hands of this Squire or that Earl,' and Tom Paine says this may be true, but that they like neither. The argument of our economists is that the tythes are taken from the landlord, and not from the farmer or the poor. That is, the farmer will give less to the landlord for land with this tax of one-tenth of all the produce of it. and will be able to pay his workmen just the same. The farmer will not then pay the landlord (if he can help it) for the tenth sheaf which goes into the parson's pocket, but will he pay the labourer for raising that which does not go into his own? Suppose instead of a tenth it were a fifth or a fourth, so as to press close indeed upon some of the parties. Who would be the sufferer? The clergyman has nothing to do with it but to receive the net-produce: the landlord, then, is to pay for everything, both loss of goods and labour of producing them: this must curtail

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his means to nearly one-half what they were before ; will he not in these circumstances try to drive a hard bargain with the farmer and keep up his rents by obstinacy and chicane in spite of the depreciation of value, and will not the farmer in his turn try to depress the poor and wring from the most dependent and needy class what has been imposed as a tax upon him by the most lordly and influential? Wherever there is power with a pretext of justice on its side, there will be the substance of injustice. What are the corn laws but legislative enactment to enable landlords to keep up the price of corn to their own advantage and the ruin of the country? The weakest, where any doubt arises, and this especially does arise when a new demand or a demand by a third party is made, proverbially goes to the wall. Suppose the tythes abolished—would this be no relief to the farmer or advantage to the labourer? So they say the taxes are not paid by the poor but by the rich ; and this, I grant, is true on one supposition, which is ever the corner-stone of this system, *viz.*, that the poor are necessarily and at all times so ground down that it is impossible without quite exterminating them to depress them lower. There is no more likely way than assuming it to be the case to prove it true in fact. By the tythes a new, unproductive, and wealthy class is introduced into society, and it is pretended that the whole burden of maintaining this class will be thrown upon the shoulders of that which was and is the wealthiest class besides, instead of being divided between all the classes of the community. As well might it be argued that

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a fat man shall get into a stage-coach already nearly full, and that only the largest robust passengers in the same vehicle will be incommoded by the addition. If he presses upon them, they will surely press upon the puny and weaker neighbours, and get what room they can out of them.

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PROSPECTUS OF A HISTORY OF ENGLISH PHILOSOPHY

Written 1808

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11. *The work which is here offered* That is, the *History of English Philosophy* which Hazlitt planned but did not bring to completion, except in the form of lectures, delivered in 1812. The preliminaries to the prospectus read: 'Proposals for Publishing in One Large Volume Quarto (Price, 1*l* 10*s* to Subscribers), A HISTORY OF ENGLISH PHILOSOPHY, containing an account of the Rise and Progress of Modern Metaphysics, an Analysis of the Systems of the most celebrated Writers who have treated of the Subject, and an Examination of the principal Arguments by which they are supported. By the Author of *An Essay on the Principles of Human Action*, and *An Abridgement of the Light of Nature Pursued*.' There follow 'Contents' and 'Plan of the Work,' the essay here reproduced. A portion of it, with alterations and omissions, Hazlitt made use of again in his opening lecture, 'On the Writings of Hobbes.'
14. 'They were made fierce,' etc. *Advancement of Learning*, I iv 6
16. 'Four champions fierce,' etc. *Paradise Lost*, II 898
'Like substances in his brain' Cf. *The Excursion*, I 138
17. *Condillac and others.* The French exponents of the 'modern philosophy,' studied by Hazlitt instead of the curriculum while at the Unitarian College at Hackney, comprise outstandingly—Etienne de Condillac (1715-1780), whose *Traité des Sensations* appeared in 1754, Claude Adrien Helvétius (1715-1771), author of the celebrated *De L'Esprit* (1758), and Baron D'Holbach (1723-1789), author of the *Système de la Nature*, published 1770
20. *The essay formerly named* That is, Hazlitt's first book, *An Essay on the Principles of Human Action*, published in 1805, and named in the preliminaries given above
21. *Gray's Letters.* To Stonehewer, August 18, 1758

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MME DE STAEL'S NEW WORK

Morning Chronicle, November 13, 1813, unsigned

(Waller and Glover, doubtful, omitted Douady, *Liste*)

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- 27 *This very able production De l'Allemagne* Par Mme la Baronne de Stael-Holstein • Paris, H. Nicolle, A la librairie stéréotype, 1810 Ré-imprimé par John Murray, Albemarle St., Londres, 1813 When brought out in Paris the book gave offence to Napoleon's censorship, and the edition was confiscated Murray republished it through the intervention of Crabb Robinson, and also brought out an edition in English, which is not that here reviewed The quoted passages are therefore presumably of Hazlitt's translation
- 31 *One without parallel* Act IV Scene 5
- 32 *A drama of this kind Die Naturliche Tochter* (1803).
- 33 *A studied suppression of imagination and natural passion* For this opinion of Hazlitt's see his conversation with Crabb Robinson in the present editor's *Life* (February 5, 1815) It will be found also, more fully developed, in his *Edinburgh Review* article, 'Schlegel and the Drama,' of February, 1816
- 34 *The pedantic lover* Captain Duretete, in Farquhar's comedy The quotation seems to be paraphrased
She writes like a Frenchwoman Her father was, of course, the eminent financier Necker (1732-1804), her mother, the daughter of a Swiss pastor and the early love of Gibbon

THE LAUREAT

Morning Chronicle, September 20, 1813, unsigned

- 35 *Our statement* Hazlitt's 'Mr. Southey, Poet Laureat,' of September 18, reprinted by himself in *Political Essays* (1819), should be read in conjunction with the present paper, which, perhaps by an oversight, he did not reprint
'Some truth there is [was], etc Dryden, *Absalom and Achitophel*, I 114
The choice lies between Mr. Scott and Mr. Southey John Wilson Croker (1780-1851), Secretary to the Admiralty and *Quarterly* reviewer, applied on Southey's behalf to the Prince Regent, in the meantime Lord Liverpool, the Prime Minister, offered the appointment to Scott, who waived it very handsomely in Southey's favour

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- 36 *Energetic lines* Southey's *Life of Nelson*, published in this year and dedicated to Croker, had on its title page a motto from Canning's poem, 'Ulm and Trafalgar.'
 'The Laureat Hearse whose Lyric [Lycid] lies' *Lycidas*, 151
 'A worthy person to fill the chair of the immortal Dryden' Here, and elsewhere in the article, *The Courier* is quoted
Literary labours in the cause of the Peninsula In the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, particularly Southey's *History of the war*, in three volumes, did not make its appearance until 1823-1832
- 37 'Pbilarmonia's undivided dale' Cf Coleridge, 'O'er peaceful Freedom's undivided dale,' *Monody on the Death of Chatterton*, line 151 Hazlitt, according to his privilege and custom, is probably quoting an early variant reading
 'Two such I saw,' etc *Comus*, 300 seq
- 38 *The personal application* If not intelligible to *The Courier*, readers of 'My First Acquaintance with Poets' will not be likely to miss it
 'Solemn temple and gorgeous palaces,' etc *The Tempest*, IV i. 152-6, freely quoted

THE POLITICAL AUTOMATON

Morning Chronicle, December 1, 1813, unsigned

A fragment, perhaps of a 'Letter to Vetus'

- 39 *Like a poor player Macbeth*, V. v 24

THE LEX TALIONIS PRINCIPLE

Morning Chronicle, February 26, 1814

A leading article, to which a title has been supplied, written between the Battle of Leipsic and the first fall of Napoleon. Some light on its non-appearance in *Political Essays* may perhaps be found in an entry of Crabb Robinson's (November 17, 1814) discussing Hazlitt's dismissal from the *Morning Chronicle*. 'On former occasions he [James Perry, the editor] had been vastly pleased with H's articles, and had turned them into leading articles. H says P's conduct is to be ascribed to the fall of Buonaparte, "by which," says he, "my articles were made in the event very unfortunate"' This would be a case in point, no doubt, so much so, that Hazlitt possibly thought it wiser not to recover it

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- 41 'Can the Ethiopian,' etc *Jeremiah* XIII 23
'Search then the ruling passion,' etc Pope, *Moral Essays*, I 174.
- 42 'Gliding meteorous' *Paradise Lost*, XII 629
Mr Whitbread Samuel Whitbread (1758-1815), brewer and Whig politician, withdrew his motion of censure on the Government on the latter's assurance that an accommodation would be sought with Napoleon See Hazlitt's 'Letters to Vetust'
Moderate and altered tone of ministers plighted honour of the Prince The interested reader may consult the Prince Regent's speech on the opening of Parliament, November 4, 1813, and Lord Liverpool's speech on the Address
- 43 *The three blind calendars of Bagdat* *Arabian Nights*, Story of the Three Calendars
- 44 *Ismael and Warsaw* The reference is to the partition of Poland (1795) by Russia and Prussia, following the storming of Ismael (1790) and Warsaw (1794), and the massacre of their respective inhabitants
'Feels a stain like a wound' Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution*
Summum jus, summa injuria Cicero, *De Officiis*, I 10.
- 45 *Golden times of Ariosto* *Orlando Furioso*, Book XV.
Mr Stroebling P E Stroebling, Court painter of Russian origin, an exhibitor at the Royal Academy 1803-1826
Note 'Pure religion breathing household laws' Wordsworth's sonnet, 'Oh friend, I know not which way I must look'
- 46 *The Corsican upstart* Coleridge seems to have prided himself on coining this nickname in the course of his journalism for the *Morning Post*
- 47 'Born to greatness . . . achieve it.' *Twelfth Night*, II v 158, etc
- 48 'Huberto shalt thou come,' etc *Job* XXXVIII 11
The virtuous Moreau Jean Victor Marie Moreau (1763-1813), French general, who was banished by Napoleon in 1804 On his return from America in 1813 he joined the Allies, and fell mortally wounded at the Battle of Dresden Hazlitt's characterization of him will be found in the *Life of Napoleon*, Chapter XLIX
Crown Prince of Sweden Jean Baptiste Bernadotte (1763-1844), marshal of France On his election as heir to the crown of Sweden in 1810 he joined the alliance against Napoleon.
And let one spirit, etc 2 *Henry IV*, I 1 157

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ROYAL ACADEMY

Morning Chronicle, May 3, 1814, unsigned

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50 'Pleased with itself [itself],' etc Goldsmith, *The Traveller*, 242

51. 'Reformed this indifferently,' etc. *Hamlet*, III ii 41.

Mr Dawe George Dawe (1781-1829), portrait painter and mezzotint engraver, elected R.A. in this year, as readers of Lamb's letters will remember.

Halls John James Halls, portrait painter, died 1834

Bigg. William Redmore Bigg (1755-1838), R.A. 1814

West. Benjamin West (1738-1820), P.R.A. in succession to Reynolds See the *Champion* paper which follows.

Lawrence Sir Thomas Lawrence (1769-1830), knighted 1815, P.R.A. in succession to West According to Miss Mitford (letter of December 28, 1818) the immediate occasion of Hazlitt's dismissal from the *Morning Chronicle* is to be found in this passage. He was 'turned off,' she says, for 'a very masterly but damaging critique on Sir Thomas Lawrence, whom Mr Perry, as one whom he visited and was being painted by, chose to have praised' The critique in question has not hitherto been identified. The newspaper of two days later (May 5) contains the paragraph. 'We by no means agree with the observations of our Correspondent on the Portrait of Lord Castlereagh, in which the Critic seems to have mixed the ebullitions of party spirit with his ideas of characteristic resemblance. Politics have nothing to do with the Fine Arts. It is universally agreed, that one of the best Portraits in the Exhibition, if not the very best, in every essential point of the art, is that of Lord Castlereagh. The likeness is perfect. It has no meretricious ornament, and the ease of the attitude, the simplicity of the composition, and tone of colouring, all recommend it as a *chef d'œuvre*' A replica of the portrait in question now hangs in the Foreign Office.

52 *One of the finest we have ever seen.* He had been looking down on it, of course, for more than a year from his place in the Press Gallery. Elsewhere he pays Lord Castlereagh the compliment of admitting him 'a noble mask of a face (not well filled up in the expression, which is relaxed and dormant), with a fine person and manner' ('On Thought and Action')

R. Reinagle. Ramsay Richard Reinagle (1775-1862), portrait, landscape, and animal painter, son of Philip Reinagle, below.

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- 52 *St. W. Beechey* R A (1753-1839), portrait painter to Queen Charlotte
Mr Thomson Henry Thomson, R A (1773-1843)
P Reinagle Animal and landscape painter (1749-1833)
Divine lines from Spencer 'With him came Hope in rank, a handsome maid,' etc; *Faerie Queene*, III xii 13, the whole stanza a favourite with Hazlitt
T Stothard Painter and book illustrator (1755-1834)
- 53 *A. Cooper* Abraham Cooper, R A (1787-1868), battle and animal painter
Owen. William Owen, R A (1769-1825), portrait painter
A great authority Sir Joshua Reynolds, in his third *Discourse* particularly
T Phillips Thomas Phillips, R A (1770-1845), whose two portraits of Byron, here making their first appearance, are well known. The first is in the National Portrait Gallery, the second, painted for John Murray and engraved in line by Robert Graves, is probably the most popular portrait of the poet
'Barbered ten times o'er' *Antony and Cleopatra*, II ii 220.
J M W Turner (1775-1851) The 'Dido and Æneas,' now in the National Gallery, was here making its first appearance
Collins William Collins, R A (1788-1847), landscape and figure painter
- 54 *J Wilson* John Wilson (1774-1855), chiefly known for his marine subjects
Nasmyth. Alexander Nasmyth (1758-1840), portrait and landscape painter
Rev. R Lancaster An honorary exhibitor of landscapes at the Academy from 1800 to 1827

BRITISH INSTITUTION

Morning Chronicle, May 7 and 10, 1814, unsigned

- 56 *The wonderful knowledge which he possessed* According to his custom when he felt that he had done justice to a theme Hazlitt incorporated the remainder of this paragraph and a portion of the following one in his *Encyclopædia Britannica* article, 'The Fine Arts' (1816)
- 57 *'Instinct in every part'* Cf 'Instinct through all proportions low and high,' *Paradise Lost*, X, 558
 Note *An admirable Essay* Lamb's, of course, 'On the Genius and Character of Hogarth'

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- 57 'Dye of a rose,' etc Pope, *Essay on Man*, I 200.
 58 'Great vulgar and the small' Cowley, *Horatian Odes*, III 1.
 60 *Original composition* • The rest of the 'Fine Arts' article in the newspaper is without distinguishing mark but is not by Hazlitt.

MR WEST'S PICTURE OF CHRIST REJECTED

The Champion, June 26, 1814, unsigned

- Crabb Robinson has an entry on the subject of this article, under date July 4. 'Took early tea with Flaxman, to whom I read an admirable criticism by Hazlitt on West's picture of the Rejection of Christ. A bitter and severe but most excellent performance. Flaxman was constrained to admit the high talent of the criticism, though he was unaffectedly pained by its severity.' This extract appeared in Dr Sadler's edition of the *Diary* of 1869, and it is the more curious that the article in question should have escaped attention until the present.
- 61 *British Gallery* That is, the loan exhibition at the British Institution, in Pall Mall, already noticed.
Mr Westall's gallery Richard Westall, R.A. (1765-1836), historical painter, held an exhibition of his works this year at his house in Upper Charlotte Street, Soho.
- 62 *Bayes of his own performance* Duke of Buckingham, *The Rehearsal*, Act I Scene 11.
- 63 'Amen sticks in our throats' *Macbeth*, II ii 31.
 'That seem'd another morn,' etc *Paradise Lost*, V 310.
- 64 'Snatch'd a grace,' etc Pope, *Essay on Criticism*, 153.
- 65 'If we love not our brother,' etc 1 John iv 20.
Late Mr Barry James Barry (1741-1806), the eccentric painter and friend of Burke. See his *Letter to the Dilettanti Society*, (1799).
- 66 'So should his anticipation,' etc *Hamlet*, II ii 304.
 'Like a sick girl' *Julius Cæsar*, I ii 198.
- 68 *Belle Assemblée* *La Belle Assemblée*, or *Bel's Court and Fashionable Magazine* London, 1806 seq.
 'Our maid's aunt of Brentford' *Merry Wives*, IV ii 179.
Old woman in Fontaine Fable of the Old Woman and Her Two Servants.
 'Made of penetrable stuff' *Hamlet*, III iv 36.

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- 68 'Power of love sublime' A Wordsworthian recollection, perhaps,
'He knows who gave that love sublime,' *Fidelity*, 63.
69. *Falstaff could not boast* 2 *Henry IV*, Act III Scene 11.

MISS O'NEILL

The Champion, November 6, 1814, unsigned

An omission, through inadvertence, perhaps, from *A View of the English Stage*

73. *Miss O'Neill* Eliza O'Neill (1791-1872), who in a short time made a reputation as a tragic actress second only to Mrs. Siddons. On her marriage in 1819 she retired from the stage.
Belvidera In Otway's *Venice Preserved*
Isabella In Garrick's play of the name, a version of Southerne's *Fatal Marriage*
74. *Miss Foote* Maria Foote (1797?-1864), who played Juliet at thirteen and in 1831 became Countess of Harrington.
75. *Mr Liston* John Liston (1776?-1846), the favourite comedian of George IV, and, perhaps more important, of Lamb and Hazlitt. See *The Times* criticism below
'Very excellent [liberal] concert' *Hamlet*, V ii 160
Miss Stephens Hazlitt's favourite, Catherine Stephens (1794-1882), whose *début* in 1813 coincided with his own as dramatic critic ('On Patronage and Puffing') In 1838 she retired from the stage on her marriage to the fifth Earl of Essex
Rosina In the comic opera of that name.
76. 'In many a winding bout,' etc *L'Allegro*, 139-40.
Mr Duruset. J. B. Durusett, tenor singer.

MRS SIDDONS

The Times, April 30, 1817, unsigned

77. *Mrs. Hill* This lady, seemingly, did not achieve fame.
Mrs Bartley Sarah Smith, later Bartley (1783-1850), a tragic actress who suffered by comparison with Mrs. Siddons and later with Miss O'Neill
- Miss Somerville* Margaret Agnes Somerville (1799-1833), better known under her married name of Mrs Bunn, who made her *début* at Drury Lane under Byron's patronage in

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- PAGE
 1816 Her line was *tragédie larmoyante*, her figure tall and commanding, so much so that Kean was accused of keeping her back, as too big for his figure
 78 *First character in which we ever saw her* also the last See *A View of the English Stage*, June 16, 1816

MR KEAN

The Times, May 15, 1817, unsigned

- 80 *The Surrend of Calais* By George Colman the younger, produced 1791
 81 'Those flashes of his spirit,' etc Cf *Hamlet*, IV 1 209
 'A flame of sacred sympathy' Cf 'A flame of sacred vehemence,' *Comus*, 795
Harley John Pitt Harley (1786-1858), actor and singer, who succeeded to the parts of John Bannister (1760-1836) on the retirement of that famous comedian in 1815

MRS ALSOP

The Times, May 23, 1817, unsigned

- 83 *The Rump* Founded on Bickerstaffe's *Love in the City*, and first produced 1781
Mrs Alsop A daughter, who did not long hold her place on the stage, of Dorothea Jordan (1762-1816), one of the greatest of English comic actresses, and for long mistress of the Duke of Clarence, afterwards William IV
 84 *Knight* Edward Knight (1774-1826), comedian
Gattie Henry Gattie (1774-1844), a member of the Drury Lane company from 1813 to his retirement in 1833

MR KEAN'S BENEFIT

The Times, May 27, 1817, unsigned

- 85 *Barbarossa* By John Brown (1715-1766), produced 1754
Paul and Virginia A musical drama by James Cobb (1756-1818), produced 1800
Pope Alexander Pope (1763-1865), actor and painter
Incedon Charles Incedon (1763-1826), tenor vocalist, retired from the stage in 1823
 86 *Mazzinghi* Count Joseph Mazzinghi (1765-1844), composer and some time musical director of the Italian Opera House

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MR KEMBLE

The Times, May 31, 1817, unsigned

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87. 'Begin to doubt the equivocation' *Macbeth*, V v 43
 89 *Mr Young* Charles Mayne Young (1777-1856), who succeeded Kemble as chief tragedian at Covent Garden

MISS O'NEILL'S BENEFIT

The Times, June 9, 1817, unsigned

- 90 *Her Mrs Haller* In Kotzebue's *The Stranger*, produced 1798.
 'Forgot himself to stone' Pope, *Eloisa to Abelard*, 24
 'Unused to flow' Shakespeare, Sonnet XXX
 91 'So fare thee well, old Jack' 1 *Henry IV*, II iv 147
The Miss Dennetts Three of them, dancers and Hazlitt's 'wards in criticism,' for whom see *A View of the English Stage*

MRS ALSOP AND MRS JORDAN

The Times, June 11, 1817, unsigned

- 92 *Doroton* William Downton (1764-1851), comedian
 93 'Take the ravished [prison'd] soul,' etc. *Comus*, 251

MR MATHEWS

The Times, July 16 and 23, 1817, unsigned

- 94 *Mr. Mathews* Charles Mathews (1776-1835), comedian, best remembered for his entertainments called 'At Homes,' which he began in 1808
Wild Oats Or, *The Strolling Gentleman* By John O'Keefe (1747-1833), produced 1791
~~Mr~~ *Russell* Samuel Thomas Russell (1769?-1845), comedian
Elliston Robert William Elliston (1774-1831), actor and manager
 95 *Mrs Glover* Julia Glover (1772-1850), an admirable comic actress, who also played Queen Margaret to Kean's Richard and Emilia to his Othello

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95. *Blanchard* William Blanchard (1769-1835), comedian
Fawcett John Fawcett (1768-1837), for many years manager of
 Covent Garden, and a famous Falstaff
Munden Joseph Shepherd Munden (1758-1832), Lamb's
 favourite
Mr Kemble's retirement from the stage Of which Hazlitt had
 written on June 25 See *A View of the English Stage*
To flatter him for what he is not Cf. Hazlitt's *London Magazine*
 'Drama' article of May, 1820 'We remember on some
 former occasion throwing out a friendly discouragement of
 Mr Mathews's undertaking the part of Rover in *Wild Oats*'
 This would be the occasion.

WILD OATS

The Times, September 12, 1817, unsigned

- 97 *Mr Stanley* This actor does not seem to have succeeded in
 establishing himself on the London stage Hazlitt himself
 appears to have had second thoughts about him
Lewis William Thomas Lewis (1748?-1811), 'Gentleman
 Lewis,' the Charles Hawtreys of his day
 98 *Give over his 'face-making'* Cf. *Hamlet*, III ii 263
'The golden cadences of poesy' *Love's Labour's Lost*, IV ii 126
At Bath about a year ago Where Hazlitt had been on a visit to
 his parents, newly removed from Addlestone in Surrey We
 date this visit by means of the article, *A Modern Tory Delin-*
eated, below
 98 *Young Mirabel* In Farquhar's *Inconstant*
 99 *Mrs Orger*. Mary Ann Orger (1788-1849), who was the wife
 of a Quaker, and whose line was broad farce
Miss Kelly Frances Maria, or Fanny, Kelly (1790-1882), who
 refused an offer of marriage from Charles Lamb, and is linked
 with our own time by her building of the existing Royalty
 Theatre

MR MUNDEN

The Times, September 15, 1817, unsigned

100. *Mr Rae* Alexander Rae (1782-1820), who made a reputation
 as Hamlet in 1812, but was eclipsed by Kean
The Poor Soldier By John O'Keefe

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THE SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND

- The Times*, September 24 and 29, 1817, unsigned
- PAGE
 102 *The Suspicious Husband* By Benjamin Hoadley (1706-1757),
 produced 1747
Mrs Mardyn For this actress, who came out in 1815, see
A View of the English Stage and Hazlitt's *London Magazine*,
 articles *passim*
Her clothes bear her up most mermaid-like *Hamlet*, IV vii 177
- 103 *The Conscious Lovers* By Steele, produced 1722
- 104 *The Confederacy* By Vanbrugh, produced 1705

MR LISTON

- The Times*, September 25, 1817
- 105 *Bartholomew fair* At West Smithfield, abolished 1855
- 106 *Tom Thumb the Great* Fielding's burlesque, produced 1730
It has been said By Hazlitt himself, in the *Gleaner* criticism
 of Miss O'Neill reprinted above Presumably pleased with
 the characterization of Liston which follows, he reproduced
 it, with omissions and modifications, in the *English Comic*
Writers
 'Those hanging locks of young Apollo' Fletcher, *The Faithful*
Shepherdess, I ii
 'Fell of hair,' etc *Macbeth*, V v ii
- 107 'From the sublime,' etc This saying is attributed to
 Napoleon
Lubin Log Liston's part in James Kenney's farce, *Love, Law,*
and Physic, produced 1812
The Widow's Choice By Allingham, produced 1808
 'High fantastical' *Twelfth Night*, I i. 15

THE BEGGAR'S OPERA

- The Times*, October 22, 1817, unsigned
- 108 'As light as bird from brake [brier]' *Midsummer Night's Dream*,
 V. i 401.
109. *Little Simmons* Samuel Simmons (1777?-1819), a favourite
 with Hazlitt

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MISS BRUNTON'S BEATRICE

The Times, November 29, 1817, unsigned

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110. *Miss Brunton* Elizabeth Brunton (1799-1860), afterwards Mrs. Yates, mother of Edmund Yates, novelist and journalist
Hilberto confined her efforts Hazlitt had seen her twice—as Letitia Hardy in *The Belle's Stratagem*, and as Rosalind. The latter notice (September 20) is one of those reprinted by Waller and Glover, the former (September 13), a very short one, is mutilated in the file at the British Museum
111. *Charles Kemble* Younger brother (1775-1854) of John Philip Kemble and of Mrs Siddons
112. *Emery* John Emery (1777-1822), famous for his representation of rustics

THE HEART OF MIDLOTHIAN

The Examiner, July 9, 1820, signed 'W'

One of a pair of dramatic criticisms contributed by Hazlitt in this summer relief of Leigh Hunt, who was ill. The other, of June 25, is reprinted by Waller and Glover

113. '*Et multorum vidit*,' etc Cf Horace, *Ars Poetica*, 142
The bills of mortality The records of burials and baptisms still kept at this date by the Company of Parish Clerks. By extension, the district covered by these returns
What a distance! The Italian Opera House in the Haymarket, one of the most ambitious of its kind in Europe, occupied the site of the present His Majesty's and Carlton Hotel. The English Opera House, in the Strand, was rebuilt in 1834 as the present Lyceum. Hazlitt, it will be remembered, did not care greatly for 'opera' in its fashionable connotations
The Cobourg Renamed the Victoria in 1833, and now famous as The Old Vic.
The Beehive A musical farce by J G Mullingen (1782-1862), produced 1811
Virginius's daughter In Sheridan Knowles's tragedy, produced in this year
114. *Mr Macready* William Charles Macready (1793-1873), whose first London appearance was made at Covent Garden in 1816
Henri Quatre A musical romance by Thomas Morton (1764-1838).
'The black Otello' *Otello*, II iii 32

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- 114 'The Jew that Shakspeare drew' Pope's reputed exclamation on seeing Macklin's Shylock
Giovanni in London By W T Moncreiff (1794-1857), produced 1817
 'Creation sees us spun,' etc Dr Johnson, *Prologue on the Opening of Drury Lane Theatre*
Dandy critics The reference is to Thomas Griffiths Wainwright (1794-1852), 'Janus Weathercock' of the *London Magazine*, who, having fallen foul of Hazlitt's article on the minor theatres in the issue for March, had been soundly answered in July See also the essay, 'On Vulgarity and Affectation'
The Circus The Royal Circus, in the Blackfriars Road, reopened as The Surrey by T J Dibdin in 1816
Miss Taylor I do not find this actress
 'Wet [drown] an eye unused to flow' Shakespeare, Sonnet XXX
 'Till we saw her' There is a little mystery here The play had been done at the Surrey in 1819, when Hazlitt was not engaged in dramatic criticism, and in the March *London* he spoke of it from hearsay and expressed the intention of seeing it when it was revived In May he writes that he has seen it, but contents himself with saying that it 'answered our warmest expectations' Looking round for something to do for the *Examiner* in the off season, he presumably be-thought himself of this production, to which he may have remembered he had not done justice, and which had been missed by Leigh Hunt
- 116 'The pale [rather] primrose that forsaken dies' *Lycidas*, 142
 'Pale primrose' is Shakespeare's

A NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS

- Oxberry's *New English Drama*, 1818, signed 'W H.'
- 119 'Like dewdrops from the lion's mane' *Troilus and Cressida*, III iii 224
 'Lord of acres' *A New Way*, Act I scene 1

THE SOLDIER'S DAUGHTER

- Oxberry's *New English Drama*, 1819, signed 'W H'
124. Mr Cherry. Andrew Cherry (1762-1812), actor and dramatist.
The Soldier's Daughter was first played in 1804

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- 124 'We compare notes,' etc Cf 'They compare notes with the amiable characters in the play, and find a wonderful similarity of disposition between them.' Lamb on the decadence of modern audiences, in *Specimens of Early Dramatic Poetry*, footnote to Middleton and Rowley's *A Fair Quarrel*
- 125 'Open as the day to [for] melting charity' 2 *Henry IV*, IV iv 32.
 'Have a foolish rheum affects them' *Othello*, III iv 51.
 'Professes too much' Cf *Hamlet*, III ii 240
 'Would not betray her' Cf *Matthew* xxvi 7

ROMEO AND JULIET

Oxberry's *New English Drama*, 1819, signed 'WH'

- 128 'Played no fantastic tricks' *Measure for Measure*, II. ii 121
 The purple light of love This metaphor, of which Hazlitt is fond, is taken from Gray, *Progress of Poesy*, 41
- 129 'Are pleasant in their lives,' etc. 2 *Samuel*, i 23.
- 130 'The gentle' Ben Jonson's epithet in the First Folio

THE BELLE'S STRATAGEM

Oxberry's *New English Drama*, 1819, signed 'WH'

- 131 *Mrs Cowley* Hannah Cowley (1743-1809), dramatist *The Belle's Stratagem* was first played in 1780
 'Every thing by turns,' etc Dryden, *Absalom and Achitophel*, I 548
133. 'Come like shadows,' etc. *Macbeth*, IV i. 111

THE RECRUITING OFFICER

Oxberry's *New English Drama*, 1819, signed 'WH'

134. *As it is now* Hazlitt, of course, knew Shrewsbury well, from his early residence at Wem, ten miles distant. Cf 'On Reading Old Books'
 'Felt their fingers ache,' etc. *Recruiting Officer*, Act I scene ii.
- 135 'Hair-breadth''scapes' *Othello*, I iii 136
 'You shall relish him,' etc *Othello*, II i 166
136. *At present lost to the stage* That is, owing to the omissions in the Royal Theatres' version of the comedy, which Hazlitt was here introducing

A BOLD STROKE FOR A WIFE

Oxberry's *New English Drama*, 1819, signed 'WH'

- 137 *Mrs Centlivre* Susannah Centlivre (1667?-1723), actress and dramatist

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THE ROAD TO RUIN

Oxberry's *New English Drama*, 1819, signed 'W.H.'

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141. *Admirable and touching scenes* Both in Act I scene iii
 142 'Pleas'd with himself,' etc Goldsmith, *The Traveller*, 242

THE BEAUX' STRATAGEM

*Oxberry's *New English Drama*, 1819, signed 'W.H.'

- 143 'Even from the tomb,' etc. Gray, *Elegy*, 92-3
 145 *Two short but precious scenes* Act I. scene 1, and Act II. scene iii

AS YOU LIKE IT

Oxberry's *New English Drama*, 1819, signed 'W.H.'

- 146 'The mind's eye' *Hamlet*, I. ii 185.
 147. *Miss Pope* Jane Pope (1742-1818), unmatched in soubrette parts, who retired in 1808
 148. 'The very faculties of eyes and ears' *Hamlet*, II ii 592
 'The best things by abuse,' etc Cf *Paradise Lost*, IV 204-5.
 'We cry to dream again' *Tempest*, III 155

JANE SHORE

Oxberry's *New English Drama*, 1819, signed 'W.H.'

149. *Rowe* Nicholas Rowe (1674-1718), poet and dramatist His *Fair Penitent* was produced in 1703, and *Jane Shore* in 1713
 'A sacrifice to grinning scorn and infamy' Cf. Gray, *On a Distant Prospect of Eton College*, 73-4

A MODERN TORY DELINEATED

The Examiner, October 6, 1816, unsigned

(Waller and Glover, doubtful, Douady, *Liste*)

- 155 *Liberate negro slaves* enslave his own countrymen. It is probable that William Wilberforce (1759-1833) is here glanced at. Cf. *The Spirit of the Age*.

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156 'Great moral lesson' Hazlitt is fond of quoting this phrase. It is from the concluding paragraph of the Duke of Wellington's letter to Lord Castlereagh, September 23, 1815, relative to the dispersal of the works of art assembled by Napoleon in the Louvre.

Estimable and philanthropic discoverer Jenner, presumably.

Corporal punishment Flogging in the army and navy, as a preservative of discipline, was a great bone of contention in these days. Cobbett went to prison for two years, in 1810, for writing against it.

The criminal laws are wise, humane, and just They were, of course, on the contrary, 'ferocious' (the adjective is that of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, latest edition), and remained so until 1832, when the Reform Parliament dealt with them.

157 *Police in the metropolis* The subject of investigation by a Parliamentary Committee in this year, the ancient system of 'parish watchmen' was swept away by Sir Robert Peel's Act of 1829.

Libel laws Southey, in the *Quarterly*, was making strenuous efforts to have them extended—to cover Cobbett and Hazlitt.

Man-traps and spring-guns Made illegal in 1827.

Chimney-sweepers After many years of agitation, in which *The Examiner* took an honourable and persistent part, the employment of 'climbing boys' was rendered finally illegal by an Act of 1842.

Parish apprentices The compulsory apprenticeship of pauper children, with the abuses that accompanied it, survived till the Poor Law Commission of 1832.

158. *A spare diet* The hit here is at Malthus's *Principles of Population*.

Bloomfield Robert Bloomfield (1766–1803), whose *Farmer's Boy* was published in 1800.

Usual and necessary consequences Cf. Wordsworth's preface to his 1816 volume, and Southey's *Quarterly* articles *passim*. See also the paper, 'Outlines of Political Economy,' below.

159 *A tailor's bill* . . . a jeweller's The Prince Regent's, of course.

160 *Thousands of Protestants were tortured* The reference is to the massacre at Nismes in 1875, following the restoration of Louis XVIII, the 'Desired'.

161 *Gloucester* Where Hazlitt rested from the coach presumably, and got the cramp out of his limbs by penning this spirited diatribe.

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ILLUSTRATION OF A HACK-WRITER

The Examiner, June 4, 1820, unsigned

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- 162 Sir F. Burdett Sir Francis Burdett (1770-1844), Radical politician and member for Westminster 1807-37. See *The Spirit of the Age*
- 163 — The name of William Mudford (1782-1848) should, no doubt, be understood as filling this blank. After a term on the *Morning Chronicle*, where Hazlitt seems to have displaced him as dramatic critic and incurred his enmity for his pains, he became assistant-editor and later editor of the *Tory Courier*. Decidedly one of Hazlitt's *bêtes noires*—'Him of the *Courier*, the Contemplative Man'—he published in 1811 *The Contemplativist, Essays upon Morals and Literature*, no doubt the work alluded to in the text.
- A perfect Scrub*. See Farquhar's *Beaux' Stratagem*
- 'Ob! for a Muse of flesh [fire]' Henry V. Prol. i
- 164 'Weigh them,' etc. *Measure for Measure*, IV. ii. 31
- The ***** The Courier*

LORD BYRON'S TRAGEDY

London Magazine, May, 1821, unsigned

(Waller and Glover, doubtful, Douady, *Liste*)

- 166 This historical play *Marino Faliero, Doge of Venice*. An Historical Tragedy in Five Acts With the Prophecy of Dante. A Poem By Lord Byron Murray, London, 1821. A previous theory. For which see Hazlitt's 'Drama' article in the *London Magazine* of April, 1820.
- Manfred*. Published 1817. Hazlitt did not review it, but see his Byron in *The Spirit of the Age*.
- 'Prouder than when blue Iris bends.' *Troilus and Cressida*, I. iii. 380.
- 167 'Endureth much,' etc. *Corinthians* xiii. 4 and *Luke* xiv. 11.
- 169 The pending controversy. See 'Pope, Lord Byron, and Mr Bowles,' Hazlitt's review of Byron's pamphlet in the next number.
- 'One touch of nature,' etc. *Troilus and Cressida*, III. iii. 175.
- 'On this side [of] idolatry' Ben Jonson, *Discoveries*.
- 170 'With blood upon his face' Cf. *Macbeth*, III. iv. 12.
- 175 'Lively, audible [spritely, waking] and full of vent.' *Coriolanus* IV. v. 238.

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- 177 *Backing his friends* Cf 1 *Henry IV.* II iv 170
178. 'Native and endued,' etc. Cf *Hamlet* IV vii 180-1

CUNNINGHAM'S SIR MARMADUKE MAXWELL

London Magazine, November, 1822, unsigned

- 179 *The dramatic poem Sir Marmaduke Maxwell, a Dramatic Poem, The Mermaid of Galloway, The legend of Richard Faulder, and Twenty Scottish Songs* By Allan Cunningham Second Edition Taylor and Hessey, 1822
Allan Cunningham 1784-1842 'An excellent song-writer and a kind and honourable man,' he is one of the minor *London Magazine* figures who have not, on any evidence we have hitherto possessed, emerged into any particularly intimate association with Hazlitt. The date of composition of this review, however (in the midst of the *Liber Amoris* débâcle), when taken in conjunction with the mention of 'private reasons' in the course of it, is interesting. Cunningham's name should possibly be added to the small and rather elusive group of Hazlitt's 'inner friends'
- 180 *It's hame and it's hame* Sir Walter made a slip here, which Hazlitt does not put right. 'Hame, hame, hame' is, of course, the ballad by Cunningham intended
Traditional Literature Cunningham's *Traditional Tales of the English and Scottish Peasantry*, after appearing serially in the *London Magazine*, were published in this year
- 181 *Allan Ramsay* Scottish poet (1686-1758) His pastoral drama, *The Gentle Shepherd*, was published in 1725
- 182 'The blank verse bails for it' *Hamlet*, II ii 339
- 183 J— Jeffrey, no doubt, with whom Hazlitt, in Edinburgh for his divorce, had lately been exchanging anecdotes.
- 185 *This attractive performance* The extracts follow and the article concludes 'The tone of sentiment in this drama is throughout amiable and moral, and the conclusion happy and skilfully brought about. We wish all our readers to read it. The Mermaid of Galloway is as beautiful as the Legend of Richard Faulder is overpowering. Is there not a resemblance in the conception of the last to the Rime of the Ancient Mariner by Mr Coleridge? Of the Songs, we do not well know which to select as the most delightfully natural. Perhaps the following is as striking for its touching and characteristic simplicity as any' ('Bonnie Lady Ann' is reproduced)

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OUTLINES OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

Written 1828

- PAGE Mr A C Goodyear's text In *The London Mercury* for June, 1826, will be found another paper, 'Outlines of Morals, or the Doctrine of Selfishness,' which, since it contains some imperfections due to the state of the MS, I have not reprinted here. A third MS in Mr Goodyear's possession, 'Outlines of the Human Mind,' he reports as 'too imperfect and fragmentary to be worth printing.' All three MSS are rough drafts, no doubt, of chapters intended for 'a little volume of outlines or elements' of various subjects which Hazlitt considered writing at this date but did not complete (see *Life*, letter to Constable, January 10, 1828)
- 189 *Rossini* Gioachino Antonio Rossini (1792-1868), much fêted on his visit to London in 1817
- 190 *Has been compared* By Coleridge in *The Friend*, 'On the Vulgar Errors respecting Taxes and Taxation'
- 192 *Mr Southey says* For a statement very like this see a celebrated *Quarterly Review* article, 'On Parliamentary Reform,' of October, 1816, which Hazlitt may have been remembering
198. *Mr Gurney* Sir Goldsworthy Gurney (1793-1875), inventor of the high-pressure steam-jet, conducted his first 'steam-carriage' experiments on the public roads in 1827-8
- 200 *The Corinthian capital* 'Nobility is a graceful ornament to the civil order. It is the Corinthian capital of polished society' Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution*
asked a labouring peasant At or near Winterslow, no doubt, where he was writing
- 202 *Mr Burke says* 'They can see a bishop of Durham, or a bishop of Winchester, in possession of ten thousand pounds a year, and cannot conceive why it is in worse hands than estates to the like amount in the hands of this earl, or that squire' Burke, *Reflections*.
- Tom Paine says* In *The Rights of Man*.
- 203 *The corn laws* Repealed 1846

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